الصحوة الإسلامية

The Islamic Awakening

by
Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn

Translated by
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Contents

Section One

Section Two

Section Three

Transliteration Table

Consonants,

ء	’	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	‘	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels, diphthongs, etc.

Short:	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long:	ـَا	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū
diphthongs:			ـَي	ay	ـَو	aw

Introduction

Verily, all praise is for Allāh; we praise Him, seek His help, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides none can lead astray, and whomsoever Allāh leads astray none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

O you who believe! Fear Allāh (ﷻ) as He should be feared. And die not except in the state of Islām (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 3:102)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ
بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, who created you from a single person (Ādam), and from him He created his wife, and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allāh (ﷻ) through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allāh (ﷻ) is Ever an All-Watcher over you. (Qur'ān 4:1)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ
لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allāh (ﷻ) and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ) he has indeed achieved a great achievement. (Qur'ān 33:70,71)

The Muslim Nation today is experiencing a blessed awakening in all aspects of its affairs; one that has been aroused by the efforts of the Muslim youth.

However, the astute observer of this awakening will find that there are many problems that hinder its progress; problems that have prompted some scholars, callers to Islām, and students of knowledge to lay down some guidelines that the youth of this blessed awakening should adhere to and follow.

Without a doubt, the enemies from without – the Jews, Christians, and others – have tried to put a stop to this awakening, simply because they fear the results of its success and because they know that, if it strengthens, spreads, and succeeds in achieving its aims, it will signal the end of their dominance.

What is Required from the Youth of this Awakening.

Firstly, the youth of this Islāmic awakening must adhere to two primary sources: Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah. It is from these sources that they must take and derive the sound methodology that they will follow in all of their endeavours.

If the methodology of the young male and female Muslims of this awakening is not based on Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Prophet (ﷺ), according to the understanding of the pious predecessors of this Nation, then it will become a reckless and misguided awakening, and it is feared that it will destroy more than it will build.

Secondly, the youth of this awakening must follow the correct methodology that was applied by the chief of mankind, Muḥammad (ﷺ), and that was then applied after him by the noble Companions (رضي الله عنهم), and that was then applied after them by the *Tābi'iūn* (next generation after the Companions) as well as by those who continued to follow them until this day.

Thirdly, the youth of this awakening must be upon one word, united; their methodology must be one, and their strength must be a united strength, and that is because disunity and discord do not lead to good but instead bring joy only to the enemies of Allāh in the East and in the West.

Therefore, we appeal to the scholars, callers (*du'āt*), and students of knowledge in all places to forsake disunity, discord, and disagreement, and to instead strive with determination to seek out the truth and to follow it, so that they can all meet at a single point and come to the realization that differences in opinion in certain secondary issues of jurisprudence or issues of *Ijtihād* (issues wherein there is no absolutely clear text that leaves no room for doubt; issues wherein scholars are called upon to weigh the worth of different proofs and to

derive rulings from them) are inevitable, and no Nation can be saved from them. In fact, the best generation of this Nation, that of the Companions (ﷺ), was not saved from such differences.

If each one of them is following proofs, without blindly and intransigently clinging to a view of a school of jurisprudence or of any other person or group, then *they must come to know that differences in certain secondary issues of jurisprudence or in issues of ijtihād should not affect their mutual affection and love.*

In this book, we find that the esteemed Shaykh, Muḥammad Ibn Ṣālih Al-'Uthaymīn – may Allāh have mercy on him – has laid down important guidelines that the youth of this Islamic awakening should adhere to, so that it truly becomes a blessed awakening, by the permission of Allāh (ﷻ). Within the chapters of this book, the esteemed Shaykh addresses many issues that are specific to the said awakening, pointing out the correct methodology to follow as well as the mistakes to avoid. He addresses many of these issues in question and answer format.

I compiled the different sections of this book from a number of lectures, religious rulings, and writings of the noble Shaykh, Muḥammad Ibn Ṣālih Al-'Uthaymīn. I undertook the task of organizing the chapters and topics based on my own discretion, along with the help of some noble brothers – may Allāh reward them well.

The book is divided in the following manner:

First section: important principles and guidelines for the success of an Islāmic Awakening

Second section: moderation and mildness in calling others to Islām

Third section: guidelines to the youth of this awakening (questions and answers)

The third section consists of 145 questions and answers, which contain guidelines for callers to Islām (*du'āt*) in general, and more specifically, for the youth of the present-day Islāmic awakening.

- *Through the questions and answers, we find that the noble Shaykh clarifies the ruling of calling to Allāh (da'wah); he also discusses the obligatory duties upon every caller (dā'ī), the way and manner in which*

one should call to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām), and the use of modern means and tools to call others to the way of Allāh.

- *The Shaykh – may Allāh have mercy on him – then clarifies and exposes many mistakes that people make when they are performing da'wah to the way of Allāh. Among the grave mistakes that the esteemed Shaykh discusses here in detail, is that of division, enmity, and hatred among the youth themselves.*

- *Then the Shaykh speaks about the importance of Islāmic summer seminars and camps for the youth; he points out the benefits and fruits that are derived from such programs. He mentions the role of the youth as well as what is obligatory upon them with regard to such programs. The Shaykh also clarifies the ruling for certain entertainment activities that might take place during summer seminars and camps – such as plays, Anāshīd (words having good meanings that are spoken in a melodious manner), and other similar activities.*

- *The Shaykh answers a number of questions related to performing Da'wah (inviting others to Islām and to the application of its precepts) to one's parents, brothers, relatives, and others.*

- *Then the Shaykh answers questions that pertain to the role of a Muslim woman in society – for example, must she perform da'wah? And how should she perform da'wah to other women? The esteemed Shaykh – may Allāh have mercy on him – answers these and related questions.*

- *The Shaykh discusses the many Islāmic organizations and groups of today: is the very validity of their existence and formation supported by proofs from the Qur'ān or Sunnah? Are they called Ahzāb (parties, factions) or not? What is the ruling regarding one who belongs to or affiliates himself with one of those groups?*

- *The Shaykh also discusses the principles and the importance of performing da'wah in societies wherein Muslims make up the minority. He mentions the responsibility of organizations and Islāmic governments in helping and aiding Muslim minorities that live in Western countries.*

- *As for the last section of questions, they pertain to inviting disbelievers to Islām – for example, is it compulsory upon Muslims to invite them to Islām? Is it permissible to travel to foreign lands in order to call others to the way of Allāh? And what are the principles and methods that should be used in calling the disbelievers to Islām?*

A Final Note

After having gathered and organized the material of this book, I presented it to the noble Shaykh. He read it and then made some corrections in terms of adding and removing material, based on what he felt was appropriate in each situation. He then gave permission to print this work – may Allāh have mercy on him, and may Allāh reward him well for his laudable services to Islām and Muslims. Indeed only Allāh is our Guardian, and He is Most Capable of answering our supplications.

I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this effort of mine pure for His Noble Countenance and to protect me from having the intention of showing off my work to others. If there is any defect or shortcoming in this work, then it is from me and from the *Shayṭān*. And if there is correctness in it, then it is from Allāh (ﷻ). O Allāh, send prayers and salutations upon Muḥammad, his family, and his companions.

Written by,
Abū Anas ʿAlī Ibn Ḥuṣayn Abū Lauz
12/2/1413 H
Riyadh

Section One

Important Principles and Guidelines for the Success of an Islamic Awakening

Introduction by the Esteemed Shaykh, Ibn 'Uthaymīn

Verily, all praise is for Allāh; we praise Him, seek His help, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides none can lead astray, and whomsoever Allāh leads astray none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger: Allāh (ﷻ) sent him with the correct guidance and with the True Religion. The Prophet (ﷺ) conveyed the message and fulfilled the trust. He was sincere in advising the Nation, and he truly strove in the way of Allāh. He left his Nation upon the clear, pure, white proof, whose night is like its day: none strays from it except for the one who is destroyed.

His rightly guided *Khalīfahs* remained after him. They were guided *Imāms* who led the Nation upon the example and teachings of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) – in their *'Aqīdah* (beliefs), their manners, their dealings, their way of calling to Allāh (ﷻ), and their *Jihād* in the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Through them, Allāh made the way which all must follow after them clear, replacing darkness with light. The first of them was Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه); then 'Umar Al-Fārūq (رضي الله عنه); then 'Uthmān Dhun-Nūrayn (رضي الله عنه); and then 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه), to whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he (ﷺ) sent him to Khaybar:

> "Go forth deliberately (and cautiously) until you reach their field. Next, invite them to Islām, and then inform them of what is obligatory upon them from Allāh's rights in Islām. By Allāh, for Allāh to guide a single man through you is better for you than for you to have red camels (red camels were considered to be the most precious of wealth among the Arabs)."[1]

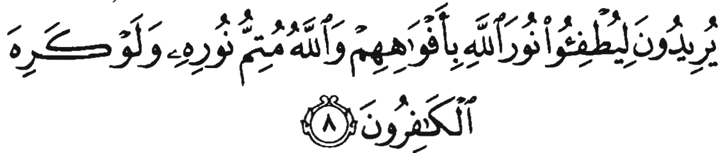
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[1] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2942), in the chapter "The Prophet's Invitation of the People to Islām..." Muslim related it as well (2406) in the chapter, "From the Merits of 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه)," from the ḥadīth of Sahl Ibn Sa'd (رضي الله عنه).

To Proceed:

My noble brothers, the many favours of Allāh upon this Islāmic Nation, in these countries and others, are apparent to all. Among those favours is the Islāmic awareness of the Muslim youth along with their hard work in building upon the efforts of those who preceded them. The goal of such efforts is to arrive at Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, through Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).

For sure, the present awakening and movement – just like all other awakenings and blessed movements – will have enemies that oppose it. Whenever the light of the truth is ignited, the fire of falsehood becomes ignited as well; nonetheless,



They intend to put out the Light of Allāh (ﷻ) with their mouths. But Allāh (ﷻ) will complete His Light even though the disbelievers hate (it). (Qur'ān 61:8)

The Islāmic awakening that we are witnessing today – and all praise is for Allāh – among our youth, both males and females, is not limited to these countries only; rather, it exists in all Muslim lands and regions. It nonetheless requires certain qualities to make it a beneficial movement that will not only spread but also carry on and perpetuate.

In what follows, I will clarify – seeking help from Allāh – those qualities and matters that must be considered. I will mention the necessary principles that must be followed for this Islāmic awakening to be successful and beneficial, so that it spreads and perpetuates, by the permission of Allāh (ﷻ).

I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to place light and clear proofs in this work, for the benefit of the author, the reader, and all Muslims.

The First Principle: Adhering to the Qur'ān and Sunnah

My brothers, the Islamic awakening of today has pervaded all Islamic countries, and all praise is for Allāh. It has to be understood, however, that this awakening must be established upon a solid foundation – in terms of Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). If it is not established upon these primary sources, then it will be a reckless and unstable awakening, which will perhaps destroy more than it will build. But if it is built upon the principles and teachings of Allāh's Book and the authentic Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), then it will have a very positive and effective influence on the Muslim Nation and on other Nations as well.

Perhaps all of us know the long story of Abū Sufyān's visit to Shām (today Shām consists of Syria and surrounding areas), where he met with its ruler, Haraql, the emperor of Rome. At the time, Abū Sufyān was still a disbeliever. During the course of their meeting, Abū Sufyān related to the emperor matters pertaining to the Prophet's worship of Allāh, to his rejection of idols, to his good manners, to his truthfulness, to his trustworthiness, to his good dealings, and to other matters that pertain to the *Sharī'ah* he came with. Haraql (the emperor) said to Abū Sufyān, "If what you say is the truth, then he will rule over what is underneath these two feet of mine."[2]

Who would imagine that, at the time, even the Arabs were not under his rule; in fact, the Prophet (ﷺ) had not even conquered Makkah; he was still considered to be an emigrant of Makkah? So who would imagine that a king such as Haraql, who ruled over so many people, would say such a statement: *"If what you say is the truth, then he will rule over what is underneath these two feet of mine?"* Did what Haraql predict actually occur or not? Did the Prophet (ﷺ) rule over what was underneath the feet of Haraql, i.e., Shām at the time, Rome

[2] A portion of a ḥadith related by Al-Bukhārī (7), which is narrated by 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) from Abū Sufyān Ibn Ḥarb (رضي الله عنه). Al-Bukhārī related it in many other sections of his compilation as well.

ruled over those lands? Isn't it true that the Prophet (ﷺ) died before the Muslims conquered Shām?

The Prophet (ﷺ) ruled over what was underneath the feet of Haraql with his *da'wah* (calling and message) and not with his person. The *da'wah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) came upon this earth and swept away idols and *shirk* (the association of partners with Allāh in worship). So when the rightly guided *Khalīfahs* ruled over Shām after the Prophet's death, they did so by his *da'wah* and *Sharī'ah* (Laws of Islām).

What we are saying is that, if the rulers of the Muslim Nation and those under them were to truly return to the Religion of Allāh, taking Muslims as their supporters, friends, and helpers, and taking the disbelievers as their enemies, then they would rule over the Eastern and Western part of the earth. They would rule over the earth not because they supported countries or personalities, not because they affiliated themselves to a specific tribe or group, but because they would have established the Religion of Allāh *'Azza Wa-Jall* (To Him belongs Might and Majesty). And Allāh (ﷻ) guaranteed to make His Religion victorious over all other Religions. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ

He it is who has sent His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islāmic Monotheism) to make it victorious over all (other) religions. (Qur'an 61:9)

An obvious concomitant of this Religion being victorious is that those who adhere to it will be victorious as well.

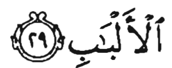
My brothers, if this consciousness that has pervaded the ranks of the Muslim youth today is not based on Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), then it will be reckless and misguided, and it is feared that it will destroy more than it will build.

But what if it is said, how can we return to Allāh's book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)?

1. Returning to Allāh's Book

Muslims cannot actualize adherence to Allāh's Book unless they strive, first to contemplate it and then to apply its teachings, because Allāh (ﷻ) says:

كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟



(This is) a Book (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember. (Qur'ān 38:29)

لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ

That they may ponder over its Verses. (Qur'ān 38:29):

Pondering over the Qur'an's verses leads to understanding its meanings.

وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ

And that men of understanding may remember. (Qur'ān 38:29)

Al-Tadhakkur ("may remember") here means applying what is in the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān was revealed for the above-mentioned meaning and wisdom. If that was why it was revealed, then let us return to the Qur'ān, ponder over its verses, and then apply its teachings. By Allāh, it is in taking these steps that happiness in this world and the Hereafter is achieved. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى
فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ ﴿١٢٣﴾ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن
ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾

"And whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery. But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. this Qur'ān) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection." (Qur'ān 20:123,124)

Hence, you will not find anyone who is more serene in his mind and more tranquil in his heart than the believer. Read, if you will, the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ
أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

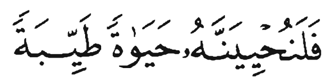
> Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islāmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment, and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter). (Qur'ān 16:97)

What is the *"good life"*? Is it abundance of wealth? Is it having many children? Or is it having security in one's life?

To be sure, the "good life" is having a cheerful, peaceful, and contented heart, even if one is in the most difficult of circumstances. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for the affair of the believer is good in its entirety, and that is [a quality] that is for no one save the believer. If he is afflicted with hardship, he is patient, and that is better for him. And if something good befalls him, he is thankful [to Allāh], and that is better for him."[3]

When a disbeliever is afflicted with hardship, is he truly patient? No, rather, he becomes sad and the world becomes constricted for him, and perhaps, he may even end up taking his own life. But the believer is patient and finds that the joy of patience results in tranquility and contentment. That is why his life is a good life. Hence, the saying of Allāh



We will give [them] a good life

is referring to life in one's heart and self.

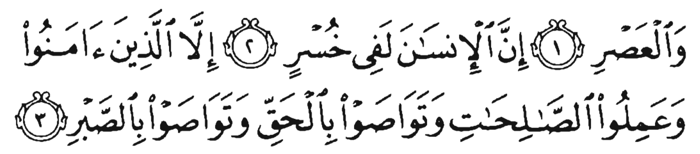
Historians mention an interesting incident in the life of Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr – may Allāh have mercy on him. He was the Judge of Egypt during his era, and when he would go to his place of work, he would arrive in a carriage that was drawn by horses or mules in a procession. One day, he passed by a Jew who was a seller of oil, and it was common for a seller of oil to wear dirty garments. The Jew halted the process and said to Ibn Ḥajr (may Allāh have mercy on him), "Indeed your Prophet says: 'The world is a prison for the believer and paradise for the disbeliever.' Yet you are the judge of judges in Egypt, and you are in this procession, in ease and comfort. And here I am, in this state of punishment and misery!"

[3] Related by Muslim (2999), in the chapter, "The Affair of the Believer is Good in its Entirety," from the ḥadīth of Ṣuhayb (ﷺ).

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr (May Allāh have mercy on him) said, "If the situation I am in is really a state of comfort and ease, then it is a state that is prison when compared to the ease (and comfort) of Paradise. And the misery you are in is Paradise when compared to the punishment of the Hellfire." The Jew said, "I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)." And thus he accepted Islām.

So no matter what the situation, the believer is in a good state, for he gains profit in this world and in the Hereafter. On the other hand, the state of the disbeliever is truly evil, for he has lost out on all good in this world and in the Hereafter (i.e., even if he is prosperous in the material sense, he will not achieve the contentment and tranquility of the believer in this world; and as to the Hereafter, his eternal abode is the Hellfire).

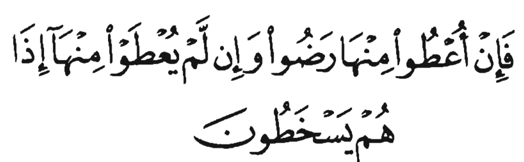
Allāh (ﷻ) said:



By *Al- Aṣr* (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience. (Qur'ān 103:1-3)

The disbelievers have forsaken Allāh's Religion and have lost themselves in their lusts, desires, and excesses. Even if one of them builds castles and is very affluent in the world, in reality he is in hell. Some of our pious predecessors have said, "Were the kings and the sons of kings to know what [the state in which] we are in, they would fight us over it with swords."

The believers find joy and delight in invoking Allāh (ﷻ) and remembering Him, and they are always content with Allāh's Decree and Divine Preordainment. If they are afflicted with hardship, they are patient. And if some blessing befalls them, they are thankful. Hence, they are in a state of delight, as opposed to worldly people, whom Allāh (ﷻ) described with the following:



If they are given part thereof, they are pleased, but if they are not given thereof, behold! They are enraged! (Qur'ān 9:58)

My brothers, Allāh's Book is in our hands for us to return to it, to ponder over its meanings, and then to apply its teachings.

2. Returning to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ)

The Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is with us, well established and preserved – and all praise is for Allāh. The people of knowledge have compiled the authentic Sunnah, and they have pointed out those narrations that are fabricated. So, the Sunnah remains clear and preserved – and all praise is for Allāh. Any person can get to authentic *aḥādīth*, either by referring to books if he is able to or by asking the people of knowledge.

What if one were to say, "How can we bring harmony between what you said, in terms of returning to Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and between what we see from some people who follow books that represent the various schools of jurisprudence? Such a person says, 'My *Madh-hab* (school of jurisprudence) is such and such.' If you offer a religious ruling to one of them, saying, 'The Prophet (ﷺ) said such and such,' he will say, 'I am of the *Ḥanafī Madh-hab*,' or, 'I am of the *Māli*ki *Madh-hab*,' or, 'I am of the *Shāfi'ī Madh-hab*,' or, 'I am of the *Ḥanbalī Madh-hab*,' or something similar to that"?

The answer: One should respond to such a person with, "We all say, 'I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.'"

What is the Meaning of the Testimony that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh?

The scholars have explained this testimony as follows: "Obeying him in what he commanded; staying away from that which he forbade or censured; believing him in that which he informed; and not worshipping Allāh except by that which he legislated." This is the correct meaning of the testimony that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.

If one says, "My *Madh-hab* (School of Jurisprudence) is such and such or such and such," we say to him, "This is the saying of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), so do not oppose it with the saying of anyone else."

Even the Imāms of the *Madhāhib* (plural of *Madh-hab*) forbade others from blindly following them (in the complete sense of blind following); they would say, "Whenever the truth becomes manifest, it is compulsory to return to it (and to forsake what one previously held as being correct)."

We say to the brother who opposes us with the *Madh-hab* of such and such person, "Both we and you bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of

Allāh; this testimony requires from us that we follow no one save the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)."

The Sunnah is plain and clear, and it is easily accessible to us. At the same time, however, I do not mean that we should make light of the importance of referring to the books of Islāmic Jurists and people of knowledge, for seeking out knowledge cannot be achieved until one refers to their books, in order to benefit from them and to learn the ways of deriving rulings from proofs.

Hence, we find that those who did not learn at the hands of the scholars made many mistakes (in their rulings and judgements). As a result, their outlook became narrow and constricted. One of them will take *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, for instance, and follow all of the implications of the *aḥādīth* found therein, even though some of those *aḥādīth* are general in their implications while others have exceptions to the rulings they impart; some are absolute in their implications while others are applied to limited situations only (by dint of other proofs). Some *aḥādīth* are even abrogated. However, those we just described are not guided to these matters. What results is much misguidance.

What is important, brothers, is that we base the present-day Islāmic awakening upon two foundations: Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). We must not give preference to any saying over them, no matter who it is that is in opposition to them.

The Second Principle: Knowledge and Insight (*Baṣīrah*)

Among the matters that the present-day Islāmic awakening must focus on is knowledge, and by this I mean knowledge of Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, which is found in two primary sources (and there is no third to them): Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

And We have also sent down unto you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'ān), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them. (Qur'ān 16:44)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ
مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا

Allāh (ﷻ) has sent down to you the Book (the Qur'ān), and *Al-Ḥikmah* (Sunnah), and taught you which you knew not. And Ever Great is the Grace of Allāh (ﷻ) unto you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)). (Qur'ān 4:113)

Knowledge is as much the foundation as it is the very substance of the message we are calling others to follow. No message can become complete, at least not in a way that pleases Allāh (To Him belongs Might and Majesty), unless it is founded on knowledge. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Imām* Al-Bukhārī – may Allāh have mercy on him – gave a chapter the following title: "Knowledge before Speech and Action." He inferred this from the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنۢبِكَ

So know (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) *Lā-ilāha-ill-Allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh (ﷻ)), and ask forgiveness for your sins. (Qur'ān 47: 19)

Therefore, every *da'wah* (message that we are inviting others to follow) without knowledge is inevitably fraught with deviation and misguidance. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned of this when he (ﷺ) described what will happen when the scholars begin to die and only ignorant leaders remain: they will rule without knowledge, not only being misguided themselves but misguiding others as well.[4]

We see many brothers who are driven by religious zeal; no doubt, that is good, for where there is no zeal, there is no courage. But emotion alone is not enough; one must also possess knowledge, by which one acts and works in his *da'wah*. That is why the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Convey from me, even if it is a single verse."[5]

We can only convey from him (ﷺ) that which we know from his *Sharī'ah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) appointed us to convey on his behalf that which we know to have come from him.

The caller must have knowledge regarding the matter that he is calling others to follow, but it must be true knowledge that is founded upon Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). All knowledge that is derived from any other source must first be compared to what is found in the said two sources. After that knowledge is compared, it is either in harmony with the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, or it is contrary to them. If it is in harmony with them, then it is accepted. And if it is contrary to them, then it must be rejected, no matter whom it is that is at the source of that knowledge. It is established that Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) said, "Stones are on the verge of falling down upon you from the sky. I say, 'The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,' yet you say, 'Abū Bakr or 'Umar said!'

If this is the case regarding the saying of Abū Bakr (ﷺ) or 'Umar (ﷺ) when it is contrary to the saying of the Messenger (ﷺ), then what will be the case when

[4] This ḥadīth is related by 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) said, "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, "Verily, Allāh does not take knowledge in a forceful manner by seizing it from the slaves [of Allāh]; rather knowledge is taken away [by the death of the scholars], until not a single scholar remains, at which point the people appoint ignorant leaders. They are asked, and they give [religious] rulings without knowledge. So they are misguided and they misguide others." Bukhārī related it (34) in the chapter, "How Knowledge is Taken away." Muslim related it as well (367) in the chapter, "The Raising and Taking away of Knowledge..."

[5] A portion of a ḥadīth that is related by Al-Bukhārī (3461) in the chapter, "What He Said about the Children of Israel," in a narration that is related by 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr (ﷺ).

it is a saying of someone who is lower than them in knowledge, in piety, and in many other of their superior qualities. The saying of anyone other than Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) or ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) is therefore even more worthy of being rejected when it is in opposition to Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) said:

فَلْيَحْذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِۦٓ
أَن تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

And let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment beware, lest some *Fitnah* (trials) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them. (Qur'ān 24:63)

Imām Aḥmad said, "Do you know what the *Fitnah* (trial) is? The *Fitnah* is *Shirk*: if some of one's sayings are rejected, deviance might occur in his heart and then his destruction follows."

Daʿwah that is not founded on knowledge is obviously a *daʿwah* that is founded on ignorance. And the harmful consequences of a *daʿwah* that is founded on ignorance are greater than the benefits it yields. A caller sets himself up as an instructor and guide; if he is ignorant, then he is not only misguided himself, but he misguides others as well – and we seek refuge in Allāh. His ignorance is not of the simple kind, rather it is worse: his ignorance is compound ignorance. The simple kind of ignorance is when one does not know and he remains quiet; his ignorance can be remedied by learning. The greater problem lies in one who is afflicted with compound ignorance: he does not know but speaks nonetheless. In this case, he destroys more than he builds.

My brothers, calling others to the way of Allāh (to Islām) based on ignorance is contrary to the way that the Prophet (ﷺ) and those who followed him were upon. Look at this saying of Allāh (ﷻ), wherein He (ﷻ) commands His Prophet (ﷺ):

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ
سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى ۖ وَسُبْحَٰنَ
ٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me with sure knowledge. And Glorified and Exalted be Allāh (ﷻ). And I am not of the *Mushrikūn* (polytheists)." (Qur'ān 12:108)

He said, "I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me," i.e., whosoever follows me must also invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, and not with ignorance.

Contemplate the saying of Allāh (ﷻ), "With sure knowledge." The caller to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām) must be upon sure knowledge in three matters:

Firstly, he must have sure knowledge of what it is he is calling others to follow

One must know the Islāmic ruling regarding the matter that he is calling others to follow. One might invite others to a practice, thinking it to be compulsory, when in fact it is not compulsory in Allāh's Religion. In this case, one is making a practice binding upon Allāh's slaves when Allāh (ﷻ) did not make that practice binding upon them. In another situation, one might invite others to abstain from a practice, thinking that it is *Ḥarām* (forbidden), when in fact it is not *Ḥarām* in Allāh's Religion. And so in this case, he is forbidding Allāh's slaves from a practice that Allāh made lawful for them.

We have heard people forbidding others from every newly invented thing (i.e., regarding worldly things), even if the invention is something that is needed and does not result in any kind of harm that is forbidden in Islām.

For example, one might say, "Do not listen to the Qur'ān from a tape recorder." "Why?" He will say, "Because this was not known to be done during the era of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions. It is therefore a *bid'ah* (innovation), and the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, 'Every *bid'ah* is misguidance.'[6]

This person is inviting unto Allāh, but not upon sure knowledge. During the era of the Prophet (ﷺ), did there exist libraries, printing presses, or shelves for books? Of course, the answer is no. There was not even a calendar during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). The first person to standardize the Islāmic calendar was 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) in the year 16 H. Do we now say that using the calendar is a *bid'ah*, and is consequently forbidden. Of course, the answer is no.

There are those who follow an opposite course; for example, one of them will say, "Place a tape player near the microphone, and play a recorded *Adhān* (call

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[6] A portion of a ḥadith that is related in Muslim (867), in the chapter, "Lightening the Prayer and the *Khutbah*," in a narration related by Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh (رضي الله عنه).

to prayer), and that will be the *Adhān* for us." This person does not want us to achieve worship through the *Adhān*; rather, he merely wants us to here the voice of a *Muadhin* (caller to prayer) [that he prefers], and this is also a mistake.

One might imagine some practice to be compulsory, basing that belief upon his *Ijtihād* that is incorrect. Would that he stopped there! But he then goes on to judge the worth of others based on his mistaken view, and this is the problem. If someone does not agree with his opinion, even though it is wrong based on proofs from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, he will hate and abhor that person. But if someone agrees with him, he will love him, even though that person who agrees with him is upon the same *bid'ah* as he is upon. All it takes to achieve his unmitigated love is for someone to agree with him. And again, this is the problem!

I do not want to belabour the point regarding this specific issue, but it is one that is common among the youth: they show support for one who issues an Islāmic ruling that is in agreement with their preconceived view, and they disassociate themselves from one who rules otherwise, a way of going about things that is clearly wrong.

One who issues a ruling in the Religion must not do so in order to be praised and loved by the people; instead, he should issue rulings based on what, in his view, is Allāh's *Sharī'ah*. The *Mufti* (one who issues Islāmic rulings, deriving them from revealed texts) articulates rulings of Allāh's Religion, and so he must know where to place his foot before he plants it: he must know something to be the true ruling of the *Sharī'ah* before he issues his ruling.

Secondly, he must know the situation of the person he is inviting

When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (رضي الله عنه) to Yemem, he (ﷺ) said to him:

"Indeed you are going to a nation from the People of the Book."[7]

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed him of that so that he could know their situation and then prepare for them.

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[7] A portion of a ḥadīth that is related by Al-Bukhārī (1395), in the chapter, "*Zakāt* is obligatory." He also related it in other sections of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim related it in the chapter, "Calling to the Two Testimonies and to the Laws of Islām," in a narration related by 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما).

Should you go to a person, inviting him [to Islām or to one of the teachings of Islām] without knowing his situation? At the very outset of your meeting with him, that person might proffer some specious argument that will leave you utterly confounded, in spite of the fact that you are upon the truth. Therefore, you must learn about the situation of the one you are calling. What is his level of knowledge? And how good is he in arguing and debating?

You apprise yourself of these matters so that you can prepare for him, and then discuss with him and debate with him. If you enter into a debate with one who is stronger than you in argumentation, and who then overcomes you with his arguments, however false they may be, a large spot will stain the truth, and you will have been the cause of it. Do not think that one who is upon falsehood will always be beaten, for the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

> "Verily, you come with your disputes to me, and perhaps one of you is more eloquent in presenting his argument than another, and then I rule for him based on what I hear from him. If I rule for one to take anything from the right of his brother, then let him not take it, for I am [in that case] cutting for him a piece of the Fire."[8]

This proves that even when a litigant is upon falsehood, he might be more eloquent in presenting his arguments than his opponent is, and so a ruling is issued in his favour by dint of that. The important point to understand here is that the caller (*Dāʿī*) must have knowledge about the one he is inviting.

Thirdly, one must know how to give *daʿwah*

This is a matter that some callers are lacking in. A caller might be zealous and enthusiastic, but he is unable to restrain himself when restraint is called for, and so he is calling others to the way of Allāh without wisdom. And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ
وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ

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[8] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2680) in the chapter, "Whoever Establishes the Proof after the Oath." Muslim related it as well (1713) in the chapter, "Ruling by what is Apparent, and Eloquence in Presenting one's Argument," in a narration related by Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها).

Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

Yet, the caller we just described, whose heart is filled with zeal for his religion, is unable to restrain himself, unable to control his emotions. When someone rejects his message, he will pounce on him like a predatory bird pounces on meat, and he will not be thinking about the consequences of his actions, which might affect not only his own person but others who are calling to the truth as well.

As you know, the truth has its enemies [who are waiting to take advantage of our mistakes]. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ

Thus have We made for every Prophet an enemy among the *Mujrimun* (disbelievers, polytheists, criminals, etc.) (Qur'ān 25:31).

The message of every Prophet has an enemy from the evildoers.

Therefore, every caller must think about consequences before he acts, weighing matters [before making a decision to act]. I encourage my brother callers (*du'āt*) to resort to wisdom, care, and deliberation, having the knowledge that Allāh (ﷻ) says:

يُؤْتِي ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ
أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ

He grants *Ḥikmah* (wisdom) to whom He pleases, and he, to whom *Ḥikmah* is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. (Qur'ān 2:269)

If we wished, we could have related here examples of that from the guidance of the Messenger (ﷺ), the teacher of good, the best of callers, and the wisest of them.[9]

If the pressing need to have correct knowledge that is founded on the Qur'ān and Sunnah is indicated by revealed texts, then it is also indicated by the dictates of the sound mind, one that is not afflicted by desires and falsehood, for how can

[9] When we come to the fourth principle, wisdom, many examples will be mentioned from the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ), examples that pertain to using wisdom and care in inviting others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

you call others to Allāh (To Him belongs Might and Majesty) when you do not know the way that leads to Him and when you do not know His *Sharīʿah*? In this case, how can you consider yourself to be a caller (*dāʿī*)?

If one is bereft of knowledge, it is upon him to first learn and then to perform *Daʿwah*. However, one might say, "Does what you just said contradict the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

'Convey from me, even if it is a single verse'?"

The answer: No. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Convey from me," which means that what we convey must actually come from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and that is what we are saying here. Furthermore, when we say that the caller needs knowledge, we are not saying that he needs to have a great deal of knowledge; but rather we are saying that he should invite only to that which he has knowledge about and that he should not speak about a matter concerning which he has no knowledge.

The Third Principle: Understanding

With regard to the present-day Islāmic awakening, a sound understanding is of paramount importance. What we mean by this is that one should understand the purport and substance of Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah. Many people have knowledge but have not been endowed with understanding; it is not enough for you to memorize Allāh's Book and *aḥādīth* from the Prophet's Sunnah without having a sound understanding of what Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) intended in any given instance. Sadly, many people derive from revealed texts rulings that are contrary to what Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) wanted for us to understand, and much misguidance is the result.

Here, I would like to make an important point: *a mistake in understanding can be even more dangerous than a mistake due to ignorance*. When the ignorant person realizes that his mistake was due to his not knowing, he can remedy his situation by learning. But the one who is mistaken in his understanding thinks in his heart that he knows, believing that what he understands is in harmony with what Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) intended. Here are some examples through which you should be able to discern the importance of a sound understanding.

The First Example:

Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِى ٱلْحَرْثِ إِذْ
نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ ٱلْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾
فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَسَخَّرْنَا
مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

And remember Dāwūd (David) and Sulaymān (Solomon), when they gave judgement in the case of the field in which the sheep of certain people had

pastured at night and We were witness to their judgement. And We made Sulaymān (Solomon) to understand (the case), and to each of them We gave *Ḥukman* (right judgement in affairs and Prophethood)) and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains and birds to glorify Our Praises along with Dāwūd (David), And it was We who were the doers (of all these things). (Qur'ān 21:78,79)

Allāh (to Him belongs Might and Majesty) preferred Sulaymān (ﷺ) to Dāwūd in this matter by granting him correct understanding:

فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا سُلَيْمَٰنَ

And We made Sulaymān (Solomon) to understand (the case).

However, there was no deficiency in the knowledge of Dāwūd:

وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا

And to each of them We gave *Ḥukman* (right judgement of the affairs and Prophethood) and knowledge.

When Allāh (ﷻ) mentioned a superior quality of Sulaymān (s) in this verse, He (ﷻ) then mentioned a superior quality of Dāwūd (s):

وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَٱلطَّيْرَ

And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our Praises along with Dāwūd (David).

This was to bring a level of equality between the two. Allāh (ﷻ) mentioned qualities that they share – *Ḥukman* and knowledge – and He (ﷻ) then mentioned how each of them was superior to the other in a specific quality. This verse indicates the importance of a correct understanding; it also points out that knowledge is not everything.

The Second Example

Imagine that you have two containers, one being filled with warm water and the other with extremely cold water. Next, suppose that it is winter time, and a man comes, wanting to take a shower because he is in the major state of impurity. A person might say, "It is better to use cold water, because there is hardship in using cold water." The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

'Shall I not guide you to that by which Allāh obliterates sins and by which Allāh raises [people] in rankings?' They said, 'Yes, O Messenger of Allāh.' He (ﷺ) said, 'Performing *Wuḍū* (ablution) well when difficulties [arise].'"[10]

This means, performing *Wuḍū* well during cold days; therefore, it is better for one to perform *Wuḍū* (ablution) with cold water than it is to perform it with warm water, even though the latter is more appropriate for the weather.

So, the person ruled that using the container of cold water is better, inferring this ruling from the aforementioned ḥadīth. As to his mistake here – and he is surely mistaken – is it in knowledge or in understanding? It is clear that his mistake is in his understanding, because the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) did not say, "For you to choose cold water for ablution." Instead, he said, "Performing *Wuḍū* (ablution) well when difficulties [arise]." And there is a difference between the two statements. If the Prophet (ﷺ) had used the wording of the former statement, we would have said, "Yes, choose cold water," but he (ﷺ) said the latter statement, which simply signifies this: coldness of water should not prevent one from performing *Wuḍū* well.

Next, we ask – does Allāh (ﷻ) want ease for His slaves or does He (ﷻ) want difficulty and distress for them? The answer to this question is in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ

Allāh (ﷻ) intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (Qur'ān 2:185)

And in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"Verily, the Religion is easy."[11]

Addressing the youth of the present-day Islāmic awakening, I stress the importance of a sound understanding. We must understand what it is that Allāh (ﷻ) wants for His slaves. Does He (ﷻ) want to make it difficult for them to perform acts of worship or does He (ﷻ) want ease for them. Without a doubt, Allāh (ﷻ) intends ease for us, and He does not want to make matters difficult for us.

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[10] Related by Muslim (251) in the chapter, "The Superiority of Performing Wuḍū well when Difficulties [Arise]," in a narration related by Abū Hurayrah (﵁).

[11] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (39), in the chapter, "The Religion is Easy," in a narration related by Abū Hurayrah (﵁).

The Fourth Principle: Wisdom

In calling others to the way of Allāh, the caller must realize the importance of wisdom.

There are four levels of calling others to the way of Allāh:

1) Wisdom

2) Fair preaching

3) Arguing in a way that is better to one who is not a transgressor

4) Action that deters the transgressor

Here are two proofs from the Qur'ān that establish the above-mentioned levels:

ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ
وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ

> Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا
ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ ۖ

> And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better, except with such of them as do wrong. (Qur'ān 29:46)

Wisdom is to perfect matters, and this means that one endowed with wisdom puts each thing in its appropriate place and gives each matter its due importance. Hence, it is not from wisdom for you to rush matters, wanting people to change overnight from the state that they are upon to the state that the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) were upon. Whoever wants that is foolish and far away from wisdom. The *Sharī'ah* was revealed to Muḥammad (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), but it was

revealed to him gradually, in stages, until finally, it became settled in the hearts of the people.

The Prayer became obligatory during the Prophet's journey to the heavens, three years before the *Ḥijrah* (migration to Madinah); or a year and a half before the *Ḥijrah*; or five years before the *Ḥijrah* – there is a difference of opinion among scholars in this issue. Yet the Prayer was still not upon the form that it is upon now. When it was first made obligatory, the Prayer consisted of two units for *Ẓuhr*, *'Aṣr*, *'Īsha*, and *Fajr*, and three units for *Maghrib*, to make odd the number of units performed during the day. After the *Ḥijrah*, after the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) had spent 13 years in Makkah, the prayer of the resident worshipper was added to, so that each of *Ẓuhr*, *'Aṣr*, and *'Īsha* consisted of four units. Meanwhile, the Fajr Prayer remained unchanged, because recitation in it is prolonged; and the *Maghrib* prayer remained the same, because it makes odd the number of units performed during the day (the number of units prayed during the night are made odd by the *Witr* prayer).

Zakāt was made obligatory in the year 2 H; it is true that it was initially made obligatory earlier on in Makkah, but no amount was specified for the *Nisāb* (amount of wealth one has to have for *Zakāt* to be compulsory upon him) or for the actual amount that must be paid. In fact, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not send out *Zakāt* collectors until the year 9 H. Therefore the legislation of *Zakāt* went through three stages:

1) The first stage took place in Makkah:

وَءَاتُوا۟ حَقَّهُۥ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِۦ

But pay the due thereof (its *Zakāt*) on the day of its harvest. (Qur'ān 6:141)

No amount was specified, so the matter was left to the discretion of the people.

2) In the year 2 H, *Zakāt* and its *Ansibah* (plural of *Nisāb*) were clarified.

3) In the year 9 H, the Prophet (ﷺ) began to send *Zakāt* collectors to collect *Zakāt* from people who owned livestock and fields (crops).

One would do well to contemplate how the situation of the people was taken into consideration in the legislation of Islāmic laws. And Allāh (ﷻ) is the Most Just of Judges.

Similarly, we know that fasting was legislated in stages. When Allāh (ﷻ) first prescribed fasting, one was given a choice between fasting and feeding [a poor person]. Then fasting became compulsory, and feeding [a poor person] became prescribed for one who is unable to fast on a continual basis (as opposed to a

woman who is menstruating, for she can make up her fast in another month; but an old, decrepit person will continue to remain in a situation wherein he cannot fast).

Wisdom dictates that the situation of the world (and of the individual in the majority of cases) cannot change overnight. So be patient with the brother you are inviting, and advance gradually with him, until you manage to completely save him from falsehood. And when dealing with others, do not put all people on a single footing, for there is a difference between one who is ignorant (and can learn) and one who resists stubbornly.

Glimpses of the Prophet's Wisdom in Inviting Others to Allāh

It is befitting that we now mention examples of the Messenger's wisdom in calling others to the way of Allāh.

The First Example: His Stance Vis-à-vis the Bedouin who Urinated in the Masjid

Anas Ibn Mālik (ﷺ) said,

> "While we were in the *Masjid* with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), a Bedouin came; he then stood and urinated in the *Masjid.* The Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, '*Mah Mah* (An expression used to severely scold someone, to indicate the graveness of a matter).' The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Do not put a halt to his urinating, but instead leave him.' They left him alone until he finished urinating. Then the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) called him and said to him, 'Any kind of urine or filth is not suitable for these Masājid; instead, they (i.e., Masājid) are only [appropriate] for the remembrance of Allāh, the Prayer, and the recitation of the Qur'ān,' or this is near to what the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said. He (ﷺ) issued an order to a man from the people, who then came with a bucket of water, which he poured over the [affected] area."[12]

[12] Related by Muslim (285), in the chapter, "It is Compulsory to Wash away Urine and other Impurities..."

In another narration, Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) stood in Prayer, and we stood with him. Then, while praying, a Bedouin said, 'O Allāh, have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and do not have mercy on anyone other than us.' When the Prophet (ﷺ) made *Taslīm* (i.e., *'Assalāmu Alaikum Warahmatullah,'* signalling the end of the Prayer), he (ﷺ) said to the Bedouin, 'You have indeed constricted that which is vast.' The Prophet (ﷺ) was referring to the mercy of Allāh."[13]

And in yet another ḥadīth related by Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ), a Bedouin once entered the *Masjid* while the Prophet (ﷺ) was seated inside. The Bedouin prayed, and when he finished, he said, "O Allāh have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and do not have mercy on anyone other than us." The Prophet (ﷺ) turned to him and said:

> "You have indeed constricted that which is vast."

Then not much time passed before the Bedouin urinated in the *Masjid*. The people rushed toward him, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Pour a bucketful of water on it (i.e., on the affected area)." He (ﷺ) then said:

> "Verily, you were sent only to make matters easy, and you were not sent to make matters difficult."[14]

And the following is in another narration:

> "After he understood [the wrong he did], the Bedouin said, "The Prophet (ﷺ) stood before me – may my mother and father be ransom for him – and he neither cursed nor scolded nor hit [me]."[15]

After having related these narrations, what more can we say about the wisdom adopted by the Messenger (ﷺ) in dealing with the Bedouin. I think that, were someone to urinate in a *Masjid* today, people would race to him, saying, "Do you have no shame," or, "Fear Allāh," or other such reproachful words. And doing so is a mistake.

I do not believe that anyone who believes in Allāh and in the Last Day would urinate in the *Masjid* for any reason other than ignorance, and ignorance must

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[13] Related by Al-Bukhārī (6010), in the chapter, "Mercy of the People for the Wanderer."

[14] Related by Al-Tirmidhī (147), in the chapter, "What has been Related Regarding Urine that Touches the Ground," and the wording we mentioned is that of *Al-Tirmidhī*. Aḥmad related it as well (2/239). Al-Tirmidhī said, "This ḥadīth is *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*." Aḥmad Shākir (7254) said, "Its chain is authentic."

[15] This narration is with Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (2/503). Aḥmad Shākir (10540) said, "Its chain is authentic."

be dealt with in the appropriate manner. The Bedouin in the ḥadīth was, no doubt, ignorant, for he had just come from the desert. He did not know what was obligatory upon him in terms of respecting and honouring the *Masājid*. But through the wisdom of the Prophet (ﷺ), he learned and he came to realize the duty he had in maintaining and honouring the *Masjid*. Had the Bedouin been interrupted while he was urinating, as was about to happen, what would have resulted?

1) To have abruptly cut off the flow of his urine might have had a harmful effect on his health.

2) If others tried to stop him, he would have sullied his garment. If he raised his *Thaub* (long garment), his private part would have become exposed. Trying to stop him would probably have resulted in a greater area of the *Masjid* being sullied by his urine.

Through this example, the one who calls others to the way of Allāh should appreciate the merits of wisdom and its salubrious consequences.

The Second Example: The Prophet's Stance Vis-à-vis Mu'āwiyah Ibn Al-Ḥakam Al-Sullami (رضي الله عنه)

Mu'awiyah Ibn Al-Ḥakam Al-Sullami (رضي الله عنه) said, "While I was praying with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), a man from the people sneezed, so I said, 'May Allāh have mercy on you (*Yarhamukallah*).' The people cast their gazes at me, and I said, 'Oh, the loss of my mother (an expression indicating extreme grief)! What is the matter with you that you look at me?' They began to strike their hands on their legs. I saw that they were silencing me, and so I stopped talking. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) completed the Prayer, and may my mother and father be ransom for him, for I have not seen an instructor, neither before him nor after him, who is better in teaching than him. For by Allāh, he did not scold me or frown at me; he did not strike me; and he did not curse me. He (ﷺ) said:

> 'Verily, anything from the speech of people is not appropriate for this Prayer; rather, it (the Prayer) is only *Tasbīh* (glorification of Allāh), *Al-Takbīr* (magnifying Allāh, by saying, '*Allahu-Akbar*,' Allāh is the Greatest) and the recitation of the Qur'ān,'

or this is near to what the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said.[16]

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[16] A portion of a ḥadith related by Muslim (537), in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Talking during the Prayer, and the Abrogation of this Practice being Permissible."

Here is a juristic benefit to be derived from the ḥadīth: If one speaks during the Prayer from ignorance or forgetfulness, then his Prayer is valid. For example, while one is praying, if someone comes to him and says, 'Where is the key to the house? I want to leave,' and he answers that it is on the windowsill, all the while forgetting that he is not supposed to talk during the Prayer, is his prayer nullified or not?

If he did indeed forget, then his prayer is valid. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

"Our Lord! Punish us not if we forgot or fall into error". (Qur'ān 2:286)

We can derive two benefits from the first and second example:

1) You should be gentle with the ignorant person because he has an excuse. When you teach him, he learns and is content to mend his ways, as opposed to one who is intransigent.

2) If one is afflicted with any impurity, he should hasten to remove it. Immediately after the Bedouin finished urinating, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered for a bucketful of water to be brought and poured on the affected area; he (ﷺ) did not delay the matter.

Similarly, when your garment, body, or place of Prayer is sullied with any impurity, you should hasten to purify the affected area, for you might forget later on and pray in an impure garment, or with an impure body, or on ground that is impure.

In an analogous incident, a young child was brought to the Prophet (ﷺ), and he (ﷺ) placed the child in his lap, for he was merciful and compassionate. The child urinated in his lap, and the Prophet (ﷺ), "Called for water," and then, "Poured it on the [affected] area."[17] The conjunction used between the words "water" and "poured" is *Fā*, which in Arabic indicates that what follows the *Fā* occurs immediately after what precedes the *Fā*. This proves that we should not tarry or waste time in removing any impurity or harmful matter.

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[17] Related by Al-Bukhārī (222), in the chapter, "The Urine of a Child," from the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

The Third Example: The Prophet's Stance Vis-à-vis the Man who Wore a Gold Ring

'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) related that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saw a gold ring on the hand of a man; he (ﷺ) removed it, threw it [down], and said,

> "Does one of you betake himself to an ember of Fire and then place it on his hand."

After the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) left, it was said to the man,

> "Take your ring and use it for some benefit (other than wearing it)." He said, "No, by Allāh, I will never take it, [after] the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has thrown it [down]."[18]

Let us reflect on how the Prophet (ﷺ) dealt with the perpetrator of a sin. If we were to compare this incident to the story of the Bedouin or of Mu'āwiyah Ibn Al-Ḥakam, we would certainly notice some difference. We sense a degree of severity in this incident, for the Messenger (ﷺ) himself removed the ring, and he warned the man, saying that what he wore on his hand was an ember of Fire.

Benefit to be derived: Every situation has words and actions that are suited to its particular circumstances.

The Fourth Example: The Prophet's Stance Vis-à-vis the Family of Barīrah (ﷺ)

'Urwah related that 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) informed him that Barīrah (ﷺ) had come to her, asking for help in her *Kitābah* (a slave used to make a deal with his owner: if he paid a certain amount of money in instalments to the owner, he becomes emancipated), and at the time, she had not paid any of her instalments. 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said to her, "Return to your people, and if they want, I will pay your *Kitābah* (i.e., the amount agreed upon between you and your owner), and your *Walā* (affiliation as well as the right of inheritance) will be for me." [They then refused, wanting Barīrah's *Walā* for themselves.] 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) informed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) of what happened (i.e., that the owners stipulated *Walā* for themselves, when it was 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) who was actually freeing Barīrah (ﷺ)) – and in another narration, 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) heard what happened, and he (ﷺ) asked me about it, so I informed him." Then the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

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[18] Related by Muslim (2090), in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Gold Rings upon Men..."

"Take her, free her, and stipulate to them *Al-Walā* (i.e., that it is yours), for *Al-Walā* belongs to the one who sets [the slave] free."

'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said, "Then the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) stood before the people, praised and extolled Allāh, and then said:

"What is the matter with men who stipulate conditions that are not in Allāh's Book? Every condition that is not in Allāh's Book is *Bāṭil* (false, null, void), even if [one sets] 100 conditions. Allāh's Judgement is more true, Allāh's Stipulation is more firm, and *Al-Walā* is only for him who sets [the slave] free."[19]

What we should note here is the profound reproach, "What is the matter with men..." It is possible that this wording was chosen so as to conceal the identities of those being reproached; on the other hand, it might have been chosen to show severity, as if their mistake made them unworthy of being mentioned. But the intended purpose more probably seems to be the former – concealing the identity of those who did wrong – for it is not right to expose someone in a general address to the people. The orator should not say, "So and so said such and such [false] statement," thus exposing him and shaming him in front of everyone.

Another benefit we can derive is from the Prophet's saying:

"...who stipulate conditions that are not in Allāh's Book. Every condition that is not in Allāh's Book is *Bāṭil* (false, null, void), even if [one sets] 100 conditions."

Therefore, any condition that is not in Allāh's Book or in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) is one that is *Bāṭil* (false, wrong, and invalid), and it is rejected upon the one who stipulated it.

One might say, "Then what do you say about laws that are contrary to the *Sharī'ah*? Are they *Bāṭil* or not?"

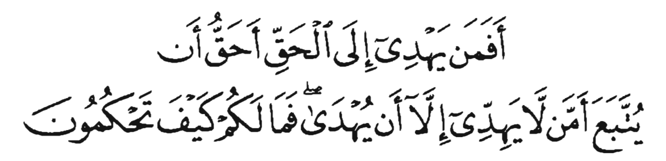
Yes, they are *Bāṭil*, no matter who it is that legislates them. It is compulsory to reject them, and it is never permissible for one to adhere to them.

Every condition that is not in Allāh's Book is *Bāṭil* even if one were to stipulate 100 such conditions, for Allāh's Judgement is more true: whatever

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[19] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2563) in the chapter, "The *Mukātib* (Slave who has Entered an Agreement with his Owner to Become Free) Seeking Help and Asking from People." Muslim (1504) related it as well, in the chapter, "The Declaration that *Al-Wala* is Only for the One who Sets [the Slave] Free."

Allāh has judged and decreed to be legislated is more true than anything else. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



Is then He, Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance (himself) unless he is guided? Then, what is the matter with you? How judge you?" (Qur'ān 10:35)

Is there not some degree of severity in this story? Some scholars have explained that, prior to the incident, the Prophet (ﷺ) had proclaimed that *Al-Walā* is for the one who frees the slave, and so their stipulation in the matter was a blatant and clear violation. And that is why the Prophet's speech about them contained some degree of severity.

The Fifth Example: The Prophet's Stance Vis-à-vis a Man who Engaged in Sexual Intercourse with his Wife during the Daytime in Ramaḍān

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said, "While we were seated with the Prophet (ﷺ), a man came to him and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I have become destroyed." He (ﷺ) said, "What is the matter with you? He said, "I occurred upon my wife (a softened way of saying, 'I engaged in sexual intercourse with my wife'), and I am fasting." The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"Is there a slave that you can liberate (to atone for your mistake)?"

He said, "No." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Are you able to fast two months consecutively?"

He said, "No." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Are you able to find [food] to feed sixty poor people?"

He said, "No." The Prophet (ﷺ) remained as he was for a while; and while we were [waiting] upon that state, a large basket filled with dates was brought to him. He (ﷺ) said:

"Where is the questioner?"

The man said, "[Here] I [am]." He (ﷺ) said:

"Take this and give it in charity (as an atonement for your transgression)."

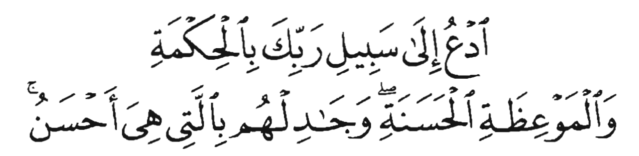
The man said, "To one who is poorer than me, O Messenger of Allāh? For by Allāh, between its *Lābitai* - meaning *Hurratayn* – (this expression means in Madīnah, because *Lābitai* signifies land that is filled with black pebbles. And Madīnah is surrounded by such land) there are no people of any household that are poorer than the people of my household." The Prophet (ﷺ) laughed until his canine teeth became visible. He (ﷺ) then said:

"Feed your family with it (i.e., with the dates)."[20]

Consider the Prophet's manner and stance in dealing with the man who came in a frightened state: "I have become destroyed." That is the frightened state he came in, but how did he leave? He left the Prophet (ﷺ) not only profitably (with the dates), but also in a state of tranquility, rejoicing over the ease found in Islām and in the first caller to Islām, the Prophet (ﷺ).

By Allāh, I am very much happy to see the zeal of our youth, to see how ardently they strive to remove any evil, to uphold the Truth, and to establish what is good and right. Yet at the same time, in my heart – by Allāh – I hope that the same youth use wisdom in their approach. When one rushes to do a courageous act which is inspired by a zealous flame that is burning within him, yet when wisdom dictates that he should not perform that courageous act, and then when he ends up actually doing it, he will certainly do something pleasing to his heart, but for the short term only, because it is most probable that a greater evil will result from his hasty action. But if he delays, showing care and deliberation, considering how he is to proceed, much good will result, and he will be saved from results that are deleterious to his own self, and perhaps, even to others.

When calling others to Allāh, when removing evil, when upholding the Truth, when ordering others to do good actions – in all of these situations, the principles of the *Sharī'ah* dictate that you use wisdom. It is not your right, my brother, to apply the *Sharī'ah* according to the dictates of your desires, but rather you must apply it according to the dictates of Allāh's *Sharī'ah*:



[20] Related by Al-Bukhārī (1936), in the chapter, "If one Engages in Sexual Intercourse in *Ramaḍān*..." He also related it in many other sections of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. And Muslim (1111) related it in the chapter, "The Severe Prohibition of Engaging in Sexual Intercourse during the Daytime in *Ramaḍān* for the One who is Fasting..."

> Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

Granted, it is no doubt better to have zeal and enthusiasm than to have a dead heart, but to have wisdom is even better. For one to have a dead heart, whereby one is not moved [to feeling anger] by evil or by good deeds being forsaken, is, by Allāh, an evil state to be upon, one that the individuals of the Muslim Nation should avoid altogether. In following its duty, the Muslim Nation orders to what is good and forbids what is evil, calling others to the way of Allāh. At the same time, however, to not use wisdom is also evil.

For one to use wisdom and at the same time for one to work for the truth with a heart that is alive – this is goodness. I invite our youth – the ones of zeal and ardour – to adhere to wisdom and to pay special heed to it when inviting others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

I am not saying to the youth, "Do not work," or, "Do not invite others to Allāh," or, "Leave the people as they are – the evildoer upon his situation and the good doer upon his situation." Instead I am saying: Forbid evil, uphold and establish what is good, and invite others to Allāh, day and night, as much as you are able:

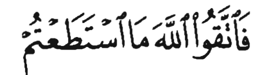
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱصْبِرُوا۟
وَصَابِرُوا۟ وَرَابِطُوا۟ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

> O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allāh (ﷻ), so that you may be successful. (Qur'ān 3:200)

But I repeat and emphasize the need for using wisdom and the need for being deliberate and intelligent in our actions.

Suppose we saw an evil being perpetrated in a particular society. Is it appropriate for us to attack the evil, crushing it and speaking harshly with those who perpetrate it? Or is it more appropriate for us to speak in a kind and gentle manner, so that if our words help to effect a change, then that is well and good; otherwise, we go to other people who will report the matter to those in authority? No doubt, proceeding in a deliberate manner is better. Therefore, you must resort to kindness and gentleness. If the results are favourable in removing the evil, then you will have achieved your aim; otherwise, take the matter to those who are of a higher standing in society, those who can convey the problem to

the people in authority. In doing so, you will have fulfilled your responsibility, for Allāh (ﷻ) says:



So keep your duty to Allāh (ﷻ) and fear Him as much as you can. (Qur'ān 64:16)

Whenever one recklessly deals with an evil being perpetrated, the results, for the most part, are opposite of those that he desired. Nothing is achieved; the harm is not removed; and perhaps his actions can stain the efforts of others who are inviting unto Allāh (ﷻ).

The Fifth Principle: Mutual Love and Good Relations

In this awakening, it is compulsory upon us to be brothers in Allāh's Religion, to have mutual love for one another. Allāh (To Him belongs Might and Majesty) says:

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

The believers are nothing but brothers. (Qur'ān 49:10)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Be slaves of Allāh, as brothers [unto one another]."[21]

This brotherhood implies that we cannot transgress against one another. The natural result, then, is that we become one Nation, undivided in Allāh's Religion, away from desires and personal opinions that are contrary to Islām.

This being said, we must now consider what has happened among the youth, or more correctly, among those youth who have certain leanings, leanings in matters of *Ijtihād* where it is permissible to make *Ijtihād*, where revealed texts can reasonably lead one to infer a different ruling. However, some people want to force others to accept what they see as being the truth, even when another person holds a different view, deeming it to be the correct view [based on proofs and valid *Ijtihād* and valid inferences].

There are youth today whom Allāh (ﷻ) has blessed with guidance; they strive ardently to apply the *Sharī'ah*, but at the same time they show aversion to those who disagree with them in matters wherein disagreement is valid, in

[21] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (6065), in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Mutual Jealousy and Plotting." He also related it elsewhere in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (6076). Muslim (2559) related it as well, in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Mutual Jealousy, Hatred, and Plotting," from the ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه). Al-Bukhārī related it from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

matters of *Ijtihād*, when revealed texts can reasonably bear two interpretations, which lead to two different rulings. It has become common for one to want all people to follow his opinion, and if they do not do so, he considers them to be upon misguidance and error; and this is contrary to what the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) were upon, and what those who came after them were upon.

Were you to pore through books of disagreement [in books of Islāmic Jurisprudence], you would find that the scholars differ in many issues, but not one from them rules that another scholar is upon misguidance because of his view or his *Ijtihād*; at the same time, one of them realizes that it is compulsory upon him to follow the truth without favouring any particular person. So yes, you should call the people to the truth, but invite them to it with gentleness, with ease, and with good words, so that you reach your desired goal.

Every single youth and student of knowledge should follow the one whom he sees as being closest to the truth, and he should excuse the one who has a different view in a given issue, if the latter disagrees based on proof. Whenever one feels that the people must follow him, he has – whether he realizes it or not – raised himself to the status of being a Messenger!

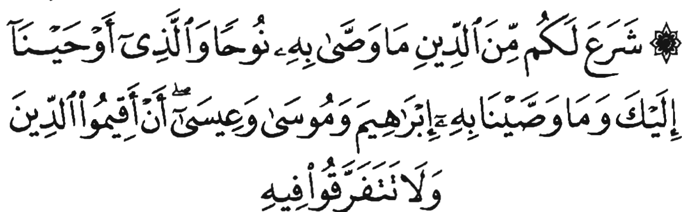
Is it fair for you to use your understanding as a proof against others, and not make their understanding as a proof against you? Think about those who despise Islām and who are enemies to Islām; they rejoice greatly upon seeing division among the Muslim youth. They hope from the very depths of their hearts to find that the Muslim youth are divided.

Verily, Allāh says:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُوا۟ فَتَفْشَلُوا۟ وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ

> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

And Allāh says:



> He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion (Islāmic Monotheism) which He ordained for Nūh (Noah), and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhim (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses) and 'Īsa (Jesus) saying you should establish Religion (i.e. do what it orders you to do practically) and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

I invite you, the Muslim youth, to come towards unity and mutual harmony upon the Religion of Allāh (To Him belongs Might and Majesty). I call upon you to be deliberate and wise in your affairs and in calling others to Allāh: victory will be written for you, *insha-Allāh* (If Allāh wills), because you will be upon what is right and you will be upon sure knowledge in the Religion of Allāh (ﷻ).

The Sixth Principle: Patience and Bearing Hardship, Keeping in Mind Allāh's Reward for Doing so

The young male and female Muslims who take up the duty of calling others to Islām are subject to ridicule, harassment, and derision – in public areas such as the marketplace and school, but even in their own homes. Many among the youth complain that their mothers and fathers are harsh with them, outwardly showing disdain for their religious zeal.

What is our position and attitude in the face of these difficulties? It is compulsory upon us to be patient and to bear hardship, all the while hoping for reward from Allāh (ﷻ). Yet such difficulties should not prevent us from making *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Allāh (ﷻ) sent Muḥammad (ﷺ) with guidance and the True Religion, yet when he (ﷺ) stood to call others to the truth, was he left alone to peacefully convey his message or was he harmed along the way? Were the Messengers (ﷺ) sent before him left alone to peacefully convey the message of Islām or were they harmed as well? Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ
رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا۟ وَأُوذُوا۟ حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَىٰهُمْ نَصْرُنَا

Verily, (many) Messengers were denied before you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), but with patience they bore the denial, and they were hurt, till Our help reached them. (Qur'ān 6:34)

فَٱصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعَزْمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِل لَّهُمْ

Therefore be patient (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) as did the Messengers of strong will and be in no haste about them (disbelievers). (Qur'ān 46:35)

Here, I will mention a few examples that highlight the patience of the Prophet (ﷺ), so that we can first understand and then follow his (ﷺ) way.

The First Example

Some of the Prophet's neighbours in Makkah would leave foul-smelling, impure filth at his doorstep, yet all along, he patiently endured the harm they inflicted on him, saying,

"What kind of neighbourliness is this?"[22]

In other words, "Why do you inflict harm upon me in this manner? How does your treatment of me reflect on your duties as a neighbour?"

The Second Example

When the Prophet (ﷺ) took Zayd Ibn Ḥāritha (رضي الله عنه) and went to Thaqīf in Ṭāif, calling unto Allāh, how did the people there treat him? They ordered the foolish ones among them to stand in two rows and to stone them, to the degree that the Prophet's heels were made to bleed...after the Prophet (ﷺ) left them, Jibrīl (عليه السلام) came to him, and with him the Angel of the mountains came as well. Jibrīl (عليه السلام) said to the Prophet (ﷺ), "This is the Angel of the mountains; he extends to you greetings of peace, so give greetings of peace to him. And he says, 'If you want me to make *Al-Akhshabayn* (two mountains in Makkah) fall down upon them, I will do so.'" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "No, perhaps Allāh will bring out of their loins (i.e., their progeny) those who worship Allāh."[23]

The Third Example

The Prophet (ﷺ) was performing prostration, worshipping Allāh (ﷻ) in front of the Ka'bah, in a place of safety; even the Quraysh considered it to be an inviolable place of safety, to the degree that if a man were to find the murderer of his father there, he would not hurt him.

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[22] Related by Al-Ṭabarānī in his *Tārīkh*, (2/343).

[23] Al-Bukhāri (3231) related the entire story in the chapter, "If One of you Says, *Āmīn*;' and the Angels are in The Heavens..." He also related it in different parts of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim related it (1795) in the chapter, "What the Prophet (ﷺ) Met with in Terms of Harm and Harassment from the Disbelievers and the Hypocrites," from the ḥadith of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

But when the disbelievers of the Quraysh saw the Messenger (ﷺ) performing prostration beside the Ka'bah, what did they do to him? They ordered a man to take the insides of a slaughtered camel and place it on the back of the Messenger (ﷺ)!

Never in the Pre-Islāmic days of ignorance was such an act perpetrated on anyone near the Ka'bah. In spite of this treatment, the Prophet (ﷺ) remained patient, and he did not move, but rather he remained as he was, prostrating to Allāh (ﷻ), until his young daughter, Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها), came and removed the filth from the back of her father. When he completed his Prayer, the Prophet (ﷺ) raised his hands, supplicating against the Quraysh.[24]

Along with being patient, should we continue to invite our families or should we become angry and observe silence? We should continue to invite them without losing hope, and when we do invite them, we should deal with them gently and in a wise manner, without resorting to harshness or severity.

One who is harsh due to the zeal he has for Allāh's Religion might end up doing more harm than good. One must have wisdom, placing each matter in its due place, and giving importance to each matter according to its due weight.

Know for sure that people will not become guided overnight, except for those whom Allāh (ﷻ) exempts from this general principle. It is the way of Allāh (ﷻ) that matters come to their completion gradually. The Prophet (ﷺ) remained in Makkah for 13 years, inviting the people to Islām, yet his *da'wah* still did not achieve complete success. Then he (ﷺ) went and lived in Al-Madīnah, and in total, the Religion only became complete 23 years after the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent.

Never delude yourself into thinking that people will change overnight. You must tread the path of *da'wah* with patience and with imperturbable determination.

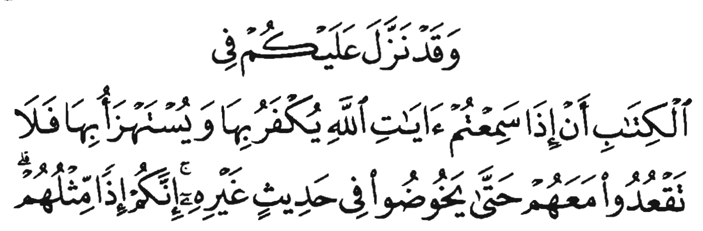
I am often asked questions similar to the following ones: Should I forsake him and disassociate myself from him? Should I break the radio? Should I smash the television? And so on.

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[24] Related by Al-Bukhārī (240) in the chapter, "If Filth is Placed on the Back of the Worshipper..." He also related it in other sections of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim (1794) related it in the chapter, "What the Prophet (ﷺ) Met with in Terms of Harm Inflicted upon him from the Disbelievers and the Hypocrites," from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه).

My answer: call unto the way of your Lord with wisdom. If you have done so, then it is categorically forbidden for you to stay with the people of sins upon their sins. I am not saying that it is forbidden for you to stay with them in their homes; rather, I am saying that it is not permissible for you to stay with them upon their sin. For example, go from one room or apartment to another [when they are sinning].

When one stays with sinners while they are sinning, then he is in fact participating with them in their sins. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ān) that when you hear the Verses of Allāh (ﷻ) being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. (Qur'ān 4:140)

Be patient and determined; if one does not change for the better today, he may do so tomorrow. In attempting to better the manners of your family, begin with easy matters and then move on gradually to the more difficult ones. By the Might of Allāh, I am confident that, if one is patient, determined, and consistent in his *da'wah*, he will in the end succeed. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱصْبِرُوا۟
وَصَابِرُوا۟ وَرَابِطُوا۟ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ٢٠٠

> O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allāh (ﷻ), so that you may be successful. (Qur'ān 3:200)

I strongly exhort the youth to be patient, determined, and persistent in their *da'wah*. If your efforts bear fruits, though they be in small matters, then that is still a good situation to be upon, for we know that to build is a much slower process than to destroy.

Imagine that we are standing before a huge castle that has a solid structure. Now suppose that we wanted to destroy it. If we had bulldozers at our disposal, we could destroy it in a single day. But to build a similar castle would take three years or more.

Therefore, we must estimate progress in the realm of ideas and concepts in the same way that we estimate progress in the physical and concrete world. If it takes three years to build a castle and three hours to destroy one, it likewise takes a long time to build the religious consciousness and manners of Nations; hence it is necessary for us to be patient and determined.

As for parents who see that their sons and daughters have taken to the path of righteousness, it is not permissible for them to stand in the way of their children, hindering them from spreading the message of the truth. Rather they should thank Allāh (ﷻ) for a great blessing indeed – their children inviting them to what is good and forbidding them from what is evil. By Allāh, this blessing is greater than the blessing of wealth, of castles, of expensive automobiles, and of any other material possession.

Parents who are blessed with righteous children should praise Allāh (ﷻ), and they should not only encourage their children, but they should also accept the truth they have with them, even if they convey that truth with a slight degree of severity. When children see acceptance, the level of their extravagance and immoderation decreases.

What causes some young callers to feel constricted in their hearts is that they find no acceptance (or even tolerance) from their families. Their families must accept what they say when it is the truth, and they must deal with them in a kind and good manner, thus improving matters for all parties involved.

O youth! And O callers unto Allāh! Every single person who invites unto the way of Allāh:

- *Must be patient in his Da'wah, unwearyingly following that which he is calling to.*
- *Must be patient when he finds himself opposed in his Da'wah.*
- *Must be patient when harm is inflicted upon him.*

The Seventh Principle: Adorning Oneself with Excellent Manners

One who calls to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) must adorn himself with noble manners, so that the effects of knowledge can be seen on his person – in his beliefs, in his worship, in his behaviour, and in all of his characteristics and dealings. If one is not upon a noble character, then his *da'wah* will fail, and even if it does succeed, its success will be of minor import.

Suppose that there is a man who warns others not to deal in usury and says to one who eats from the proceeds of usury, "Indeed, you are at war with Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ), for Allāh (ﷻ) says this in the Noble Qur'ān:"

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَذَرُوا۟ مَا بَقِىَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟
فَأْذَنُوا۟ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ

> O you who believe! Be afraid of Allāh (ﷻ) and give up what remains (due to you) from *Riba* (usury) (from now onward), if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ). (Qur'ān 2:278,279)

That man admonishes and lectures the people, reminding them of their religious duties and saying words that make them fear Allāh (ﷻ). What would you think of him if you then came to know that he dealt in usury himself? Did he adorn himself with the manners of one who calls to the way of Allāh? Of course the answer is no.

Suppose that another man warns people against forsaking the congregational prayer. He addresses the people, saying, "Indeed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

'Verily, the heaviest Prayers for the hypocrites are the *Isha* Prayer and the *Fajr* Prayer. Had they known what is in them (in terms of reward), they would have come to them, even if they had to come, crawling.'"[25]

Then suppose we found him staying behind from the *'Isha* and *Fajr* prayers. Is this from the characteristics of one who calls to the way of Allāh? Never!

Consider the case of a third man who says, "O slaves of Allāh, beware of backbiting, for backbiting is from the major sins. And Allāh (ﷻ) compared the backbiter to a man who eats the flesh of his deceased brother."[26] But then we hear him backbiting someone, making fun of him behind his back. Is this from the characteristics of one who calls to the way of Allāh? Never!

Consider a fourth and final example: a man who warns others not to sow dissension among people (the act of doing this is called *Namīmah*). He says, "*Namīmah* is one of the causes of punishment in the grave, for it is authentically related that when the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by two graves on one occasion, he (ﷺ) said:

'Verily, they are both being punished, but they are not being punished for something great (at least the perpetrators do not consider their sins to be great or significant). As for one of them, he would not cover himself from urine (i.e., he would not protect his body or clothes from urine splashing on them); and as for the other, he would walk with *Namīmah* (i.e., he would go from

[25] Related by Al-Bukhārī (657) in the chapter, "The Superiority of Praying *'Isha* in Congregation." Muslim (651) related it as well in the chapter, "The Superiority of the Congregational Prayer and the Gravity of Missing it," from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

[26] This comparison is found in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ
وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن
يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions; indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allāh is the One Who accepts repentance, [He is] Most Merciful. (Qur'ān 49:12)

one person to another, reporting what he heard people say, with the intention of sowing dissension).'[27]"

Next, suppose that the man in question goes from person to person, spreading mischief and sowing dissension, without being mindful of his actions. Is this the character of one who calls to the way of Allāh (ﷻ)? Never!

One who calls to the way of Allāh must possess the very same characteristics and manners that he is inviting others to adopt – regardless of whether this is in matters pertaining to worship, to dealings, or to one's demeanour. He must possess those characteristics in order to save himself from being among the first of those with whom the Hellfire is ignited – and we seek refuge in Allāh.[28]

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[27] Related by Al-Bukhārī (216) in the chapter, "From the Major Sins is to not Protect Oneself from Urine." He also related it in other sections of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim (292) related it in the chapter, "The Proof of Urine being Impure and the Obligatory Duty of Remaining Purified from it," from the ḥadīth of Ibn Abbās (ﷺ).

[28] The Shaykh is alluding to the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ), who related that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, "Verily, the first of the people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection is a man who was martyred. He will be brought, and Allāh will acquaint him with His Favours, and the man will know and acknowledge them. Then He (ﷻ) will say, 'What did you do for them (i.e., in terms of showing thankfulness for those Favours)?' He will say, 'I fought in Your way until I became martyred.' Allāh will say, 'You have lied; instead, you fought so that it would be said: [He is] brave, and that has indeed been said.' Then He will issue an order regarding him, and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire.' And [another of the first ones who is judged] is a man who learned knowledge and [then] taught it, and he [would] read the Qur'ān. He will be brought, and Allāh will acquaint him with His Favours, and he will know and acknowledge them. Then Allāh (ﷻ) will say, 'What did you do for them?' He will say, 'I learned knowledge and I [then] taught it, and I [would] read the Qur'ān.' He (ﷻ) will say, 'You have lied. Instead, you learned knowledge so that it would be said: [He is] a scholar. And you read the Qur'ān so that it would be said: [He is] a reciter. And that has indeed been said.' Then an order is made regarding him, and he is dragged on his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire. And [another of the first ones that is judged] is a man for whom Allāh made matters easy and comfortable, giving him from all of the different kinds of wealth. He will be brought, and Allāh will acquaint him with His Favours, and the man will know and acknowledge them. Then He (ﷻ) will say, 'What did you do for them?' He will say, 'I spent for You in the way of every cause that You love [for Your slaves to spend upon].' He will say, 'You have lied. Instead, you did that so that it would be said: [He is] generous. And that has indeed been said.' Then an order will be made regarding him, and he will be dragged on his face, until he is thrown into the Hellfire." Muslim related this ḥadīth (1905) in the chapter, "Whoever Fights for Show or Reputation Deserves the Hellfire."

Brothers, if we were to honestly look at our situations, we would find that we often invite others to adopt a certain practice, but then we do not adopt it ourselves! No doubt, this is a major shortcoming, unless we avoid adopting the practice we are calling to for a greater benefit; for example, a man exhorts others to perform *Jihād* in the way of Allāh, encouraging them to do so with their wealth and bodies, each according to his ability, but he himself is occupied in more important duties. In this case, it should not be said that he did not adopt the practice that he is calling upon others to adopt. A man might invite others to fight in the way of Allāh, but the country he is in is lacking in Islāmic knowledge. His *Jihād* in terms of spreading knowledge might be better than his *Jihād* in terms of fighting with a spear or sword. For every situation, there are words and actions that are best suited to it. A superior action might at times become inferior to an otherwise inferior one when circumstances raise the status of the latter action.

This is why the Messenger (ﷺ) would sometimes invite people to perform certain actions, but would then become busy himself in more important matters...My brothers, to be one who truly calls to the way of Allāh and to increase the likelihood of one's *da'wah* being accepted, one should adorn himself with those manners and characteristics that are appropriate and suitable to his mission as a *dā'ī*.

The Eighth Principle: Breaking the Barriers between the Caller and the People

Some callers are led by their zeal and by their hatred for sin to neither visit nor advise those who perpetrate evil. This is wrong; furthermore, this is not the wise course to follow. The wise course to follow is to visit, to invite, to convey, to exhort, and to admonish. And do not say, "It is not possible for me to sit with these evildoers." If you, as a caller to the way of Allāh, do not want to sit with them, walk with them, or visit them in order to invite them to the way of Allāh, then who will take care of them? One who is like them? Or will those who are bereft of knowledge take care of them?

One who calls to the way Allāh must train himself and even coerce himself, if need be, to be patient and to break the barriers that separate him from the people, so that he becomes able to convey the *da'wah* to those who are in need of it. As for one who becomes haughty or proud, saying, "If someone comes to me, I will convey the *da'wah* to him, but if no one comes to me, I am not bound to convey it to them," then he is acting opposite to how the Messenger (ﷺ) acted.

One who reads history knows that, during the days of Minā, the Prophet (ﷺ) would go to the abodes of the polytheists, inviting them to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). It is related from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he (ﷺ) said,

> "Is there any man who will carry me to his people, so that I may convey the speech of my Lord (Allāh), for the Quraysh have prevented me from conveying the speech of my Lord (To Him belongs Might and Majesty)."[29]

If this was the way of our Prophet, our ideal, our *Imām* – Muḥammad (ﷺ) – then it becomes obligatory upon us to be like him in performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

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[29] Related by Al-Tirmidhi (2925) in chapter 24. He said, "This ḥadīth is *Gharib Ṣaḥīḥ*." Abū Dāwūd related it (4734) in *Al-Sunnah*, in the chapter, "In The Qur'ān." Ibn Mājah (201) related it in the chapter, "Among The Matters That The Jāhimæyah Rejected." Al-Dārimi related it (3354) in the chapter, "The Qur'ān is Allāh's Speech." Aḥmad related it in his *Musnad* (3/390) from the ḥadīth of Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh (رضي الله عنه) and others.

The Ninth Principle: The Use of Kindness and Gentleness

As much as we are able to do so, we must be kind and gentle when calling others to the way of Allāh, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> "O 'Ā'ishah! Verily, Allāh is *Rafīq* (Kind and Merciful and Gentle); He loves gentleness, and He gives for gentleness that which He does not give for harshness and that which He does not give for anything other than it."[30]

Allāh (ﷻ) bestowed this quality upon His Prophet (ﷺ), whereby he (ﷺ) was gentle and kind in dealing with Allāh's slaves. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ
ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ

> And by the Mercy of Allāh (ﷻ), you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you. (Qur'ān 3:159)

Use yourself as an example when trying to understand others. If someone were to speak with you in a harsh manner, something inside of you would prompt you to answer him in like manner. The *Shayṭān* (Devil) would cast into your heart the thought that he does not sincerely want your betterment, but only wants to criticize. Whenever one feels that the person addressing him wants to criticize him, he will not yield to his guidance or to his *da'wah*. But when one goes to someone with kindness and gentle words, much good will result. Both Allāh (ﷻ) and the Prophet (ﷺ) directed us to adopt a kind and gentle manner in inviting others to the way of Allāh.

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[30] Related by Muslim (2593) in the chapter, "The Superiority of Kindness (and Gentleness)," from the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

One such example is the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَقُولُوا۟ رَٰعِنَا وَقُولُوا۟ ٱنظُرْنَا

O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger (ﷺ)) *Raina* (in Hebrew it means "an insult," and the Jews used to say it to the Prophet (ﷺ) with bad intentions) but say *Unẓurna* (Do make us understand). (Qur'ān 2:104)

Here, Allāh (ﷻ) forbade them from a word, but then guided them to a substitute for it. So, when you close a door upon the people because Allāh forbade them from entering it, open for them a door that is lawful to enter, for the people require movement and action, as has been indicated in the ḥadīth:

"The most truthful of names are *Ḥārith* and *Hammām* (*Ḥārith* means ploughman, and *Hammām* means energetic)."[31]

The Prophet (ﷺ) applied the same methodology. When good dates were brought to him, he (ﷺ) said:

"Are all of the dates of Khaybar like this (i.e., of the same quality)?" They said, "No, but we take (trade) one *Sa'a* (a measurement that is equal to four handfuls) of this for two *Sa'as* [of an inferior kind of date], and two *Sa'as* [of this good kind of date] for three [*Sa'as* of an inferior kind of date]." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Do not do so; [instead,] sell *Al-Jam'* (poor quality dates) for *Darahim* (a kind of currency), and then purchase *Janīb* (high quality dates) with those *Darāhim*."[32]

The Prophet (ﷺ) closed the door upon a forbidden practice (what they were doing is one of the kinds of usury), but he (ﷺ) then opened a lawful door, guiding them to a way that is *Ḥalāl* (lawful).

When one is calling to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), he should mention a lawful substitute for every prohibited practice he warns against.

Were one to scrutinize the life and guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ), he would find him to be gentle and kind to the Muslim Nation. The most prominent

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[31] Related by Abū Dāwūd (4950) in the chapter, "Changing Names."

[32] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2201, 2202) in the chapter, "If One Wants to Sell a Date for a Date that is Better than it..." And he related it in many sections of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim related it as well (1593) in the chapter, "Selling Food, an Equal Amount (or Kind) for an Equal Amount (or Kind)," from the ḥadīth of Abū Sa'īd (ﷺ) and Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ).

example in this regard is the story of the Bedouin who entered the *Masjid* and then urinated in it. The people stood to scold him because he did in fact perpetrate a great wrong, but the Prophet (ﷺ) immediately reproached not him but them, and they became quiet. When the Bedouin finished urinating, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered for a bucketful of water to be poured onto the affected area, in order to remove the impurity. He (ﷺ) then called the Bedouin and said:

> "Verily, things of impurity and filth are not suitable for these Masājid; rather they are only for the Prayer, for *Al-Takbīr* (saying, '*Allāhu-Akbar*,' Allāh is the Greatest), and for the recitation of the Qur'ān."

Or this is near to how the Prophet (ﷺ) said it. This incident is related in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*. And in the narration found in the *Musnad* of *Imām* Aḥmad, the Bedouin said, "O Allāh, have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and do not have mercy on anyone other than us." He said this because Muḥammad (ﷺ) was kind and gentle in instructing him.

I call upon my brothers to follow the same methodology in their *da'wah* and in this way they prevent evil, for they will achieve through gentleness that which they cannot achieve through harshness.

The Tenth Principle: The Youth should have Open Minds and Hearts Regarding Differences of Opinion among Scholars

The youth who adhere to their Religion and are concerned with the *da'wah* should have open minds and hearts regarding differences of opinion among the scholars, finding a good excuse for the scholar who supports a view, which in their mind, is wrong. This is an issue of paramount importance, for there are those who search out for and scrutinize the mistakes of others, with the intention of ruining their reputation, and this is from the greatest of mistakes. If backbiting a common man (i.e., one who is neither a scholar nor a student of knowledge) is from the gravest of sins, then backbiting a scholar is graver and more severe. The harm of backbiting a scholar is not limited to his person, but it also extends to the Islāmic knowledge he carries with him. If a scholar is lowered in the eyes of the people, what he says is also lowered. So if he speaks the truth and guides others to it, then backbiting him acts as a barrier between the people and the knowledge he has with him. And the danger involved in this occurring is considerable.

It is necessary for the youth to attribute good intentions to scholars when there is disagreement among them. At the same time, there is no harm for the youth to go to a scholar they think made a mistake, and discuss the matter with him, for it may happen that that scholar will be able to show them that he was in the right all along. Often times one imagines that a scholar erred, but after discussing the issue with him, one comes to realize that he was right.

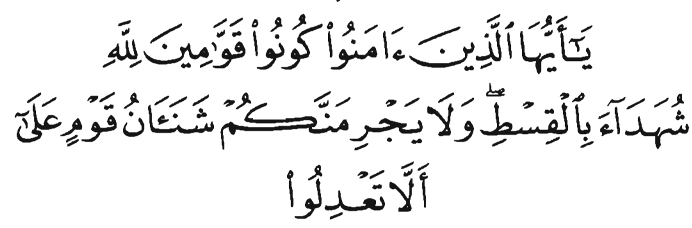
> "Everyone from the children of Ādam errs frequently, and the best of those who err frequently are those who repent."[33]

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[33] Related by Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (3/198); by Al-Dārimi (2727) in the chapter, "About Repentance." Al-Tirmidhi related it (2499) in chapter 49. Ibn Mājah (4251) related it in the chapter, "About the Mention of Repentance." In *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Jāmi'* (4/171), Al-Albāni ruled that it is *ḥasan*. In *Sharḥ Al-Sunnah* (5/92), Al-Arnā'ūṭ said, "Its chain is *ḥasan*," from the ḥadith of Anas (ﷺ).

When people begin to rejoice over the mistakes of scholars, spreading news of those mistakes to the people, discord and disunity will result, and that is not the way of our pious predecessors.

Likewise, in the case of rulers: it is not permissible for us to use their mistakes as a pretext for vilifying them in a general way, and yet remain blind to their good qualities and actions. Allāh (ﷻ) says in His Book:



> O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allāh (ﷻ) and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. (Qur'ān 5:8)

This means: do not let the hatred you have for a people lead you to being unjust, for justice is compulsory. And it is not permissible for one to take the mistakes of rulers, scholars, or anyone else for that matter, and then spread news of those mistakes to the people, while remaining quiet about their good qualities and deeds. This is not justice.

Always use yourself as a gauge in such matters. If one were to spread news of your bad qualities to the people and hide your good qualities, you would say that he committed a crime against you. If that is your attitude regarding your own self, then you must maintain the same attitude regarding others as well. I already mentioned the solution to this problem: contact the person you think made a mistake and directly discuss the issue with him, and then matters should become clearer [to you or to him] after the discussion.

How often it occurs that one rescinds one of his opinions after discussing it with someone else:

> "The example of a believer in relation to another believer is that of a building: parts of it strengthen its other parts."[34]

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Whomsoever it pleases to be taken away from the Hellfire and to enter Paradise, then let his death come to him while he believes in Allāh and in

[34] A portion of a ḥadith related by Al-Bukhārī (6026) in the chapter, "The Believers Cooperating with one Another." Muslim (2585) related it in the chapter, "The Mutual Mercy, Compassion, and Help of the Believers," from the ḥadith of Abū Mūsa Al-Ash'ari (ﷺ).

> the Last Day. And let him take (or give) to the people that which he loves to come to him."[35]

This is justice and uprightness.

The heart of the caller should be open to those who differ with him, especially when he knows that the other party has good intentions, differing only because of some proof he considers to be stronger. One must be flexible in such matters, not allowing differences of opinion to lead to enmity and hatred between brothers, except in the case of a man who is obstinate in his view: the truth becomes clear to him, yet he persists upon his falsehood. Such a person should be warned against; his enmity to the truth became established when the truth became manifestly clear before him, yet he still refused to follow it.

Nonetheless, we must make a distinction here: there are secondary issues that people differ in, and in reality, Allāh (ﷻ) made matters in such issues wide and spacious for His slaves; here I am referring to issues that are not from the primary teachings of the Religion; those teachings regarding which the one who opposes is ruled to be a disbeliever. Other than those primary teachings, Allāh (ﷻ) made matters spacious for His slaves; the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "When the judge rules after making *Ijtihād* (using all resources – proofs and sound principles of deduction – available to him in order to arrive at a ruling), and is then correct, then he has two rewards. And if he is mistaken, then he has one reward."[36]

In any case, whether he is wrong or right, the judge is rewarded, with two rewards if he is right and with one reward if he is wrong.

If you do not want anyone to differ with you, keep in mind that every other person also does not want anyone to differ with him. And Allāh (ﷻ) clarified the returning point for any disagreement:

وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَىْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ

> And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allāh (ﷻ) (He is the ruling Judge). (Qur'ān 42:10)

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[35] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Muslim (1844) in the chapter, "It is Compulsory to be Faithful to One's Pledge to the *Khalīfah*..." from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (رضي الله عنه).

[36] Related by Al-Bukhārī (7352) in the chapter, "The Reward of a Judge when he Makes *Ijtihād*..." And Muslim related it (1716) in the chapter, "Clarification Of The Judge's Reward when he Makes *Ijtihād*..." from the ḥadīth of 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (رضي الله عنه).

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

فَإِن تَنَٰزَعۡتُمۡ فِي شَيۡءٖ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمۡ
تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞ وَأَحۡسَنُ تَأۡوِيلًا

> (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and in the last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'ān 4:59)

Whenever two parties disagree among themselves, they must defer to these two primary sources – the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). It is categorically forbidden to oppose the speech of Allāh and His Prophet (ﷺ), no matter whose speech it is that one is giving preference to. When the truth becomes clear to you, it is incumbent upon you to "strike the saying of anyone who opposes that truth against the side of a wall," and you must never look back at that saying, no matter how high the status and knowledge is of the person who said it. Human beings err, but there is not a single error in the speech of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

It greatly saddens me to hear that some people who are considered to be serious in their pursuit of the truth, are divided, with each one of them taking on a different title or descriptive quality. In reality, this is a serious mistake, for Allāh's Religion is one, and the *Ummah* (Nation) of Islām is one. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمۡ أُمَّةٗ وَٰحِدَةٗ وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمۡ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿٥٢﴾

> And verily! This, your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me. (Qur'ān 23:52)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ):

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُواْ دِينَهُمۡ وَكَانُواْ شِيَعٗا لَّسۡتَ
مِنۡهُمۡ فِي شَيۡءٍۚ إِنَّمَآ أَمۡرُهُمۡ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفۡعَلُونَ

> Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allāh (ﷻ), Who then will tell them what they used to do. (Qur'ān 6: 159)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

﴿ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ ﴾

> He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and 'Īsa saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Because this is the guidance of Allāh (ﷻ), we must follow and implement it. We must gather and discuss issues in order to improve and rectify our situation, and not in order to accuse one another or exact retribution from one another. Whenever one debates an issue with another person, intending to achieve victory for his view and to belittle the view of his opponent, without intending betterment, then for the most part, he will leave the debate in a way that does not please Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

In matters of discord, we must truly become one Nation. I am not saying that no one makes mistakes; people are sometimes right and sometimes wrong in their views. But what we are discussing here is how to rectify and mend what is wrong. I am not helping to change a person's incorrect view by backbiting and slandering him. The way to help him is to meet with him and to discuss the situation with him, and if he stubbornly persists in his falsehood, I then have the right, or rather the duty, to clarify his mistake and to warn people against it. And by following this methodology, we can help improve matters.

As for division or the forming of factions, this is something that pleases no one save the enemies of Islām and of Muslims.

The Eleventh Principle: Controlling One's Emotions According to the Dictates of the *Sharī'ah* and of the Sound Mind

Those who are involved in the blessed Islāmic awakening of today must not allow their emotions to carry them away. Here, I am referring to those kinds of emotions that hinder one from sound reasoning, from working in harmony with the teachings and principles of the *Sharī'ah*. If one does not confine his emotions to sound reasoning and to the principles of the *Sharī'ah*, his emotions will lead him to recklessness, whereby more harm than good will result. And this is why we should be farsighted in our approach.

I do not mean, however, that we should endorse falsehood or remain quiet while falsehood is being perpetrated; instead, I am saying that we should enter houses through their doors – that we should try, as much as we can, to tread the path of wisdom in removing and eradicating any given falsehood. Although it might take one longer to tread the path of wisdom, the results achieved by doing so are pleasing to all.

I exhort my young brothers who are a part of the present Islāmic awakening to be prudent, to be farsighted, and to consider every matter sensibly and judiciously before they take any action. Simply put, they should always act and behave according to the teachings of the *Sharī'ah*, and in order to do that, they should contemplate the Prophet's wisdom in performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh or in removing evil, so that they can take him as their ideal – and what a blessed and wonderful ideal he (ﷺ) is!

So I say the following to my young brothers who are a part of the present-day Islāmic awakening:

If we want to arouse the Muslim Nation from its present slumber and state of heedlessness, we must proceed on a studied course, based on a sound set of principles. We must adhere to sound principles if we want judgement in all matters to be with Allāh only and if we want to establish Allāh's Religion upon the earth and upon Allāh's slaves; a goal that is lofty indeed, but a goal that

cannot be achieved through emotions alone. Therefore, we must control our emotions, keeping them within the proper boundaries set by the *Sharī'ah* and by sound sense.

The Twelfth Principle: Scheduling of Reciprocal Visits and Trips among the Youth

I urge the youth to schedule mutual visitations among themselves, so as to solidify the bonds of brotherhood and love that exist in their hearts. Together, they should study their own situation as well as the situation of their Nation, so that together, they can be like one heart and one man. When coupled with short and long journeys [for the said purpose], mutual visitations [in one's locality] reap wonderful results. The responsibility of encouraging this from the youth lies to a great extent with teachers and administrators in schools and organizations.[37]

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[37] Allāh (ﷻ) clarified the value and importance of mutual cooperation among the righteous ones when He (ﷻ) said:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَوٰةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَوٰةِ
الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ
أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

> And keep yourself (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) patiently with those who call on their Lord (i.e. your companions who remember their Lord with glorification, praising in prayers, and other righteous deeds, etc.) morning and afternoon, seeking His Face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost. (Qur'ān 18:28)

When a young man is among a group of good and righteous youth, they help him in his Religion by keeping his free time occupied in worship, good deeds, and acts of obedience. Al-Muzani (May Allāh have mercy on him) said, "Every person has those whom he loves and those whom he hates; this is a given, so one should strive to be with those who obey Allāh (ﷻ)." (*Bustān Al-'Ārifīn*, by Al-Nawawi, pg. 42) >

And in a ḥadīth related by Abū Mūsa Al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The example of a righteous companion and an evil companion is that of the seller of perfume (Musk) and the blower of bellows. As for the seller of perfume, he will give [perfume] to you as a gift, you will buy from him, or [at least] you will find a pleasant fragrance from him. As for the blower of the bellows, either he will burn your garment or you will detect a foul odour emanating from him." Related by Al-Bukhārī (5534) and Muslim (2628).

In another ḥadīth, Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man went to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and said, "When is the Hour?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "And what did you prepare for the Hour?" He answered, "Love for Allāh and His Messenger." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Then, indeed, you are with those whom you love." Anas (رضي الله عنه) said, "After Islām, we were never happier [with a matter] than we were with the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'Then, indeed, you are with those whom you love.'" Anas (رضي الله عنه) then said, "I love Allāh, His Messenger (ﷺ), Abū Bakr, and 'Umar, and I hope to be with them, even though I have not performed the deeds that they performed." Al-Bukhārī related this ḥadīth (3688) and so did Muslim (2639).

Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (رضي الله عنه) related that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, "Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) says, 'My love is compulsory (i.e., it is necessarily realized) for those who love one another for Me, for those who sit with one another for Me, for those who visit one another for Me, and for those who spend upon one another for Me." This narration is related in the *Muwatta* of Imām Mālik.

As for excursions and trips that are organized for those who call to the way of Allāh, they usually take place during holidays and weekends. We call upon the youth to take advantage of such excursions through beneficial activities and deeds, the fruits of which are reaped in this world and in the Hereafter.

The Thirteenth Principle: One should not Lose Hope upon Witnessing much Falsehood and Evil

When we see much evil being perpetrated around us, and when we see the menacing strength of those who oppose the truth, we should not lose hope, thinking that the betterment of this Nation is beyond our grasp. Ibn Al-Qayyim – may Allāh have mercy on him – expressed the same meaning in verse form:

> The truth is aided but tested as well, so do not Fall into a state of wonder, for this is the Sunnah (way) of the Most-Merciful

In this world, the struggle between truth and falsehood is as inevitable as it is necessary:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

> Thus have We made for every Prophet an enemy among the *Mujrimūn* (disbelievers, polytheists, criminals, etc.) But Sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and Helper. (Qur'ān 25:31)

The evildoers want to misguide people by blinding them from the truth. They want to subjugate people, effectively silencing them, but Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا

But Sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and Helper. (Qur'ān 25:31)

It is not permissible for us to lose hope. We must be patient and wait, for in the end, success and victory are for the righteous believers who fear Allāh (ﷻ). There are those who want to transform the righteous thinking of the youth into vile and wicked thinking, and to realize this aim, they strive tirelessly, working not only to instill doubts into the minds of the youth, but also to hinder them

from the truth they are upon. But they, as well as every person who strives against the truth, will be afflicted with defeat and ruin, for Allāh (ﷻ) aids His Religion and His Book.

It is necessary for a *dā'ī* to be very positive regarding the success and continuation of his *da'wah*. A positive attitude acts as a strong impetus for one to continue making *da'wah*; for one to continue striving and keeping his efforts alive. Conversely, hopelessness causes failure and a delay in one's *da'wah*.

In this regard, one does well to contemplate the positive attitude of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his farsightedness, even on the most difficult day for him in calling his people; the day he (ﷺ) returned from Al-Ṭāif, after having called them to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). They had rejected his message, and they had urged the foolish ones among them to inflict harm upon the Prophet (ﷺ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) reached Qarnuth-Tha'ālib, Jibrīl (ﷺ) called him, saying:

> "Verily, Allāh heard what your people said and the [words] they rejected you with, and He (ﷻ) has sent to you the Angel of the mountains, for you to order him as you please regarding your people." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Then the Angel of the mountains called me, extended greetings of peace to me, and then said, 'O Muḥammad, it is as you want. If you want me to, [I will] crush them with *Al-Akhshabayn* (two mountains in Makkah).'" The Prophet (ﷺ) answered, "I instead hope that Allāh will bring out from their loins (i.e., from their progeny) those who worship Allāh alone, without associating any partners whatsoever with Him."

The Fourteenth Principle: Communicating with those who are in Authority

Leaders, rulers, judges, and men in authority over specific districts or municipalities– we must communicate with these people as well as others who are in positions of authority regarding the welfare of society. We must not be harsh or dry in our dealings with them, considering ourselves to be in one valley while they are in another valley. When such a feeling overcomes us, it becomes near impossible for us to achieve our aims, so let us instead be humble in order to arrive at the truth: "For whosoever is humble for Allāh, He (ﷻ) raises him."[38]

When we open the lines of communication between ourselves and between all who hold positions of authority – rulers, judges, leaders of specific districts, etc. – the results will surely be salubrious, by the permission of Allāh (ﷻ).

One of the causes of a successful *da'wah* and Islāmic revival is for the *da'wah* to be supported by the authorities in any given country. *Da'wah* and authority are two important pillars for bettering the Nation. If *da'wah* is performed under the aegis of those in authority, the goal of the *dā'ī* will be achieved, by the permission of Allāh. But if one of these two pillars is missing – if *da'wah* is not being carried out or if it is being carried out, but those in authority are not supporting it – then efforts are lost or at least become weakened to a significant degree.

Any country that wants true honour and stability must apply Allāh's Religion and must proceed according to the guidance of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), for when it does so, it is in no need of any other set of teachings or system of laws. Allāh's Word is supreme and His Religion is victorious, so whoever follows these two will achieve supremacy and success over all who oppose him:

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[38] Related by Muslim (2588) in the chapter, "It is Recommended to Pardon and to Show Humility," from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ).

وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٦﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَٰهِرًا مِّنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ غَٰفِلُونَ

> (It is) a promise of Allāh (ﷻ), and Allāh (ﷻ) fails not in His Promise, but most of men knew not. They knew only the outside appearance of the life of the world and they are heedless of the Hereafter. (Qur'ān 30:6,7)

And any country that wants true honour and stability must support *da' wah* to the way of Allāh with all means that are available to it – with words, with actions, with encouragement, and with the show of force for those who oppose the *da' wah*. In instances that the Qur'ān does not deter people from wrongdoing, Allāh (ﷻ) might deter them through those in authority. When *Īmān* weakens in the hearts of people, the deterrence of authority is the best means of preventing people from sinning and of impelling them to do acts of obedience, until they themselves become upright.

Similarly, those who call to the way of Allāh upon sure knowledge must communicate with those who have authority in the country they are in, by encouraging them to follow the truth they are upon, by clarifying to them the blessed results – in this life and in the Hereafter – of following the truth, by stressing the evil results – in this world and in the Hereafter – of opposing the truth, by encouraging them to support *da' wah* to the way of Allāh, and by warning them about the evil consequences of forsaking *da' wah* to the way of Allāh.

I ask Allāh to unite our hearts, to make us from those who seek judgement with Allāh and His Messenger, to make our intentions pure, to clarify to us that which is hidden to us from Allāh's *Sharī' ah*, to make us from those who invite to what is good and forbid what is evil, to bless the Muslim Nation with guided and righteous rulers, who judge by the truth and who are just. Indeed, Allāh is Most Generous, Most Gracious. All praise is for Allāh, Lord of all that exists. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations upon our Prophet, Muḥammad, upon his family and upon all of his Companions.

Section Two

Being Reasonable and Just in one's *Daʿwah*

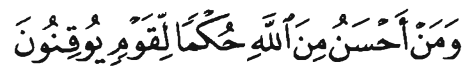
The Obligation of Calling to the Way of Allāh and its Virtues

Inviting others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is the invitation (*da'wah*) of goodness and truth, for it is an invitation to justice and good deeds; an invitation that is in harmony with the sound inborn nature of man and with the judicious intellect to which intelligent people are naturally attracted.

Da'wah to the way of Allāh is an invitation to *Īmān* (faith) in Allāh (ﷻ) and in every sound belief that the heart and breast of man find peace in. It is an invitation to the *Tawḥīd* of Allāh (Islāmic Monotheism) – in the Oneness of His Lordship (i.e., that there is only One Lord for the entire universe – Allāh. He is the sole Creator, Sustainer, Provider, etc.), in the Oneness of the worship of Allāh (i.e., none deserves to be worshipped but Allāh alone, and He has no partner), and in the Oneness of His Names and Attributes.

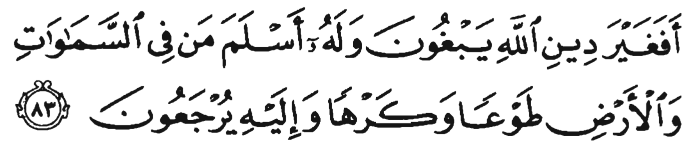
Da'wah to the way of Allāh is a call to the certainty of Allāh (ﷻ) being One in His Lordship, without Him having any partner whatsoever. So there is no creator, planner, or ruler of all that exists except Allāh alone. With such a certainty of belief, one cuts off the attachment of one's heart to anyone other than Allāh (ﷻ). Therefore, one's fear, hope, and trust are exclusive to Allāh (ﷻ); one fears, hopes from, and trusts completely in Allāh (ﷻ) alone.

Da'wah to the way of Allāh is a call to the certainty of there being no ruler or judge over the creation or among the creation except for Allāh (ﷻ) alone. This belief comprehends the decrees He (ﷻ) ordains and the laws He (ﷻ) reveals. Upon achieving this level of certainty, people cease to seek judgement with any set of laws except for Allāh's *Sharī'ah*; they cast off every judgement that is contrary to the judgement of Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), because every judgement that is contrary to Allāh and His Messenger's judgement is falsehood and oppression. This leads to corruption in the lands and among the people:



And who is better in judgement than Allāh (ﷻ) for a people who have firm Faith. (Qur'ān 5:50)

And with this faith, people submit to Allāh's commands, executing them in the manner that Allāh (ﷻ) intended for them to be executed. And they do so regardless of whether a given ruling corresponds to their desires or runs contrary to their desires. Likewise, they submit to Allāh's Divine Decree. Allāh's commands are executed among them, and they submit to Him, whether they are pleased with that or not:



> Do they seek other than the religion of Allāh (ﷻ), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned. (Qur'ān 3:83)

Da' wah to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is an invitation to worshipping Allāh alone, with a sureness of faith that none (neither angel, nor prophet, nor righteous believer, nor anyone else for that matter) deserves to be worshipped except Allāh (ﷻ), for He (ﷻ) is the sole Creator, and so He alone must be worshipped.

Da' wah to the way of Allāh is an invitation to having complete and sure faith in every Name and Attribute that Allāh (ﷻ) established by way of His Book or by way of the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ). This involves having complete faith that all of His Attributes are real and established in a manner that is suitable to Him (i.e., to His Greatness, Perfection, Majesty, All-Mightiness, etc.) – without distorting them, without effectively negating them, without explaining their reality, and without likening them to the attributes of anything or anyone from creation:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَىْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ

> There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, All-Seer. (Qur'ān 42:11)

Da' wah to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is an invitation to following the straight path, the path of those on whom Allāh has bestowed His Grace – the prophets, the *ṣiddīqūn* (i.e., those followers of the Prophet (ﷺ), who were first and foremost to believe in him, such as Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه)), the martyrs, and the righteous ones. This is the path of Allāh, which He (ﷻ) placed for His slaves: it leads to Him and following it rectifies their religious and worldly affairs. When Allāh's slaves follow this path, the roads to innovation become sealed, roads by which the innovators lead one another astray. By following the roads of innovation, the innovators allow their desires to lead them away from Allāh's Religion, and so they follow other than that which Allāh (ﷻ) commanded them to follow. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِى مُسْتَقِيمًا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلسُّبُلَ
فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

"And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become *Al-Muttaqūn* (the pious)." (Qur'ān 6:153)

Those who follow other than the Straight Path implicate themselves in that which Allāh (ﷻ) forbade them from, in terms of division and disunity. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

۞ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ
وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ

He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and 'Īsa saying you should establish Religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Da'wah to the way of Allāh is an invitation to noble manners, good deeds, honouring the rights of others, establishing justice among people, and giving each possessor of a right his due right. When this *da'wah* is accepted, brotherhood and mutual love are established among the believers, a condition which consequently results in complete safety and organization within the framework of Allāh's *Sharī'ah*. When *da'wah* to the way of Allāh is embraced by the people, not only do all base manners and deeds die away, all false systems that are based on incorrect beliefs and flawed human laws die away as well; everyone who invites to or attempts to establish those false laws is then met by failure and humiliation.

Because the aforementioned benefits are achieved through performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh and because much falsehood is prevented at the same time, *da'wah* to the way of Allāh holds a very important status in Islām. Those who call to the way of Allāh become the inheritors of the noble messengers (ﷺ) in their mission.

Evidences and the Obligation of *Da'wah*

Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

لِّكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَٰزِعُنَّكَ
فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

For every nation We have ordained religious ceremonies which they must follow; so let them (pagans) not dispute with you on the matter, but invite them to your Lord. Verily! you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) indeed are on the (true) straight guidance. (Qur'ān 22:67)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

And let them not turn you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) away from (preaching) the *Āyāt* (revelations and verses) of Allāh after they have been sent down to you, and invite (men) to (believe in) your Lord, and be not of *Al-Mushrikūn* (those who associate partners with Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 28:87)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

۞ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ
وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ ٱللَّهُ
يَجْتَبِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَن يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَا
تَفَرَّقُوٓا۟ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ
سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَّقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ

أُورِثُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴿١٤﴾
فَلِذَٰلِكَ فَٱدْعُ ۖ وَٱسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۖ
وَقُلْ ءَامَنتُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِن كِتَٰبٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ
بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ ۖ
لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ۖ ٱللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and 'Īsa, saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion). Intolerable for the *Mushrikūn*, is that to which you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) call them. Allāh (ﷻ) chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides unto Himself who turns to Him in repentance and in obedience. And they divided not till after knowledge had come to them, through selfish transgression between themselves. And had it not been for a Word that went forth before from your Lord for an appointed term, the matter would have been settled between them. And verily, those who were made to inherit the Scripture after them (i.e. Jews and Christians) are in grave doubt concerning it (i.e. Allāh's true religion-Islām or the Qur'ān). So unto this (religion of Islām, alone and this Qur'ān) then invite (people) (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and *Istaqim* [stand firm], as you are commanded, and follow not their desires but say: "I believe in whatsoever Allāh (ﷻ) has sent down of the Book and I am commanded to do justice among you, Allāh (ﷻ) is our Lord and your Lord. For us our deeds and for you your deeds. There is no dispute between us and you. Allāh (ﷻ) will assemble us (all), and to Him is the final return. (Qur'ān 42:13-15)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ ۚ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islām), enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. And it is they who are the successful. And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves

after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment. (Qur'ān 3:104,105)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

And who is better in speech than he who invites (men) to Allāh, and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims." (Qur'ān 41:33)

Ibn 'Abbās (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (ﷺ) to Yemen, commanding him to invite the people there to Islām, the Prayer, and *Zakāt*. (*Al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*)

Sahl Ibn Sa'ad (ﷺ) related that, on the day of Khaybar, the Prophet (ﷺ) said the following to 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (ﷺ):

"Go forth deliberately (and cautiously) until you reach their field. Next, invite them to Islām, and then inform them of what is obligatory upon them from Allāh's rights in Islām. By Allāh, that Allāh guides a single man through you is better for you than for you to have red camels (red camels were considered to be the most precious of wealth among the Arabs)."

Tamīm Ibn Aws Al-Dārī (ﷺ) related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"The Religion is sincerity."

Tamīm (ﷺ) said, "We said, 'To whom, O Messenger of Allāh?'" He (ﷺ) said:

"To Allāh (by submitting to Him outwardly and inwardly, by doing what He commands and abstaining from what He forbids, etc.), to His Book (by learning it, reciting it properly, teaching it, applying its teachings, etc.), to His Messenger (by loving him, by learning and applying his Sunnah, etc.), to the *Imāms* of the Muslims (by helping them to carry out their duties, by uniting under their leadership, by advising them against wrongdoing in a way that is better, etc.), and to the common Muslims (by showing compassion to them, by looking after their welfare, by teaching them that which benefits them, etc.)."[39]

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever calls to guidance, for him is reward equal to the rewards of those who followed him [upon that guidance]; and that does not decrease anything

[39] Related by Muslim (55) in the chapter, "The Announcement that none Enters Paradise Save the Believers."

from their reward. And whosoever calls to misguidance, upon him is sin equal to the sins of those who followed him; and that does not decrease anything from their sins."[40]

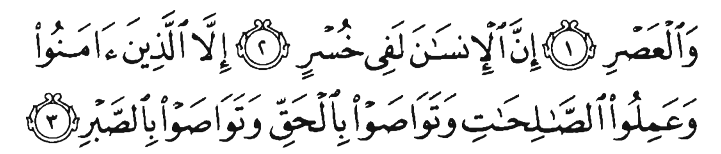
These verses and *aḥādīth* indicate the superiority of calling to the way of Allāh, but they also indicate that it is compulsory to do so; compulsory because the positive results of calling to the way of Allāh are of paramount importance: Allāh's *Sharī'ah* is conveyed and preserved, many great benefits are achieved for people in their religious and worldly pursuits, and much evil is prevented from afflicting the people. And success lies with Allāh (ﷻ).

Being Reasonable and Just when Performing *Da'wah*

The *Da'wah* of the Messengers (ﷺ) revolves around three matters:

1) Knowledge of Allāh (ﷻ) by His Names and Attributes
2) Knowledge of Allāh's *Sharī'ah* (Laws, commands, etc.)
3) Knowledge of the reward prepared for those who obey Allāh (ﷻ) and the punishment prepared for those who disobey Allāh (ﷻ).

Da'wah to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is one of the pillars of good deeds; prosperity is not complete without it. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



By *Al- Aṣr* (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience. (Qur'ān 103:1-3)

To "*recommend one another to the truth*" entails calling others to the truth. To "*recommend one another to patience*" entails inviting others to be patient upon Allāh's Religion, both in its primary teachings and in its detailed legislations.

Calling to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) lies in the middle between two extremes.

[40] Related by Muslim (3674) in the chapter, "Whoever Establishes a Good or Evil Sunn (Way or Practice)..."

This occurs when the caller is severe in Allāh's Religion, expecting from people that they apply every detailed aspect of the Religion, without pardoning them in matters regarding which the Religion pardons them. When such a caller sees people being derelict in matters that are not compulsory but are recommended, he is overcome by zeal, and so he proceeds to censure them with harsh words, as if they were guilty of abandoning an obligatory deed. Here are some examples of this occurring:

The First example: A man sees people directly rising up to stand for the second unit or for the fourth unit of Prayer without first observing a brief pause in the seated position; sitting down briefly in those two instances is referred to by the people of knowledge as the 'sitting of repose.' The man in question thinks that the 'sitting of repose' is Sunnah, so when he sees others not performing it, he speaks to them in harsh tones, demanding that they explain why they did not perform it – why they stood up immediately after prostrating without sitting down for a brief moment first. His tone indicates that he deems the 'sitting of repose' to be a compulsory deed, despite the fact that some of the people of knowledge have related *Ijmā'* (consensus) on the ruling that the 'sitting of repose' is not compulsory. The different scholarly views in this issue do not go beyond three opinions:

1) It is recommended for everyone
2) In no situation and for no person is it recommended
3) It is recommended for those who need to sit briefly before standing in order to catch their breath – such as the aged, the sick, and the one who has pain in his knees, etc.

Some people highlight the importance of sitting down briefly after the first (or third) unit, wrongly raising it to the status of an obligatory act during prayer.

The Second Example: A man witnesses a worshipper rising after the rukū' (bowing position) and then placing his right hand on his left hand. He says to the worshipper, "You are an innovator, for you must let your arms hang, so that your hands are resting on your sides. If you place your hands on your chest, then you are perpetrating an innovation and an evil deed." But in reality, the issue is one of *Ijtihād* (the proofs do not clearly indicate a ruling; rather, the *Mujāhid* has to use principles of deriving rulings from revealed texts in order for him to arrive at his ruling; in such instances, two different *Mujāhids* can arrive at a different ruling. One of them must be correct, and he has two rewards; the other has a single reward). The stronger opinion might be with the one who says that, after the *rukū'*, one must place his two hands on his chest, just as he places them there

before the *rukū'*, a ruling that is indicated by a ḥadith related by Al-Bukhārī, in which Sahl Ibn Sa'ad (ﷺ) said, "It was commanded to the people that a man should place his right hand on his left arm during the Prayer."[41]

The Third example: A man reproaches a worshipper for making the slightest of movements during his prayer (i.e., a movement that is not from the prayer itself), even though such movements are *Mubāh* (an action that is permissible, whereby one is neither rewarded nor punished for performing it, unless his intention indicates otherwise). The action of making a slight movement during prayer is related in the Sunnah. In the situation mentioned above, the man strongly censures and criticizes the worshipper, even though the movement he made is permissible, for a similar amount of movement, or an even greater amount of movement, is related in the *Sharī'ah* of the Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, the man is stressing a matter that need not be stressed (or even mentioned for that matter).

One day, when Abū Juhayfah (ﷺ) was praying, he held on to the bridle of his horse (so that it would not race away), and the horse moved forward. Abū Juhayfah (ﷺ) continued to pray while he was slowly walking along with his horse, until he completed his prayer. A man, similar to the stern men mentioned in the first two examples, saw him and began to say, "Look at this man; look at this man; look at this man." In studying this incident, we must take into consideration that Abū Juhayfah (ﷺ) was an eminent Companion. When he completed his prayer, he explained to the man that what he did is permissible and that, had he left his horse alone, it would have went away, and he would not have caught up with it until the night.

Contemplate the importance of a sound understanding in the Sharī'ah and the ease and flexibility of its legislations.

The Prophet (ﷺ) once prayed with his Companions while he was carrying Umāmah Bint Zaynab (ﷺ) – Zaynab (ﷺ) being the daughter of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and Umāmah (ﷺ) being his granddaughter. The Prophet (ﷺ) was leading the people in prayer, and at the same time he was carrying the young child. When he (ﷺ) stood, he carried her, and when he (ﷺ) performed

[41] Related by Al-Bukhārī (740), in the chapter, "Placing the Right [Hand] over the Left [Arm]."

prostration, he (ﷺ) placed her on the ground.[42] This involved movement (movement that was not from the prayer itself) and indicated compassion to a young child. While the Prophet (ﷺ) was leading the people in prayer, some of them might have turned to see how the Prophet (ﷺ) was treating the young child; nonetheless, the Prophet (ﷺ) – who was the most pious, most righteous, and most knowledgeable of the people – carried on in the same manner.

The Fourth Example: Once, when a group of the Prophet's Companions gathered together, they asked about the good deeds the Prophet (ﷺ) performed in private, and they were informed thereof. However, they considered the Prophet's actions to be small, and so they said, "Verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) has been forgiven for his previous and future sins, but we on the other hand need to do more so that Allāh (ﷻ) forgives us our sins. So one of them said, "I will fast, without breaking my fast." The second man among them said, "I will stand, without sleeping." And the third man among them said, "I will not marry women." News of what each one of them said reached the Prophet (ﷺ), and he (ﷺ) said:

> "As for me, I fast and I break my fast (i.e., there are days that I do not fast); I stand and I sleep; and I marry women, so whosoever turns away from my Sunnah, then he is not from me."[43]

All of this proves that we should not, rather we must not, exceed the proper bounds in Allāh's Religion; equally so, when we are inviting others to Allāh's Religion and when we are performing deeds that are specific to us. We must be moderate in the sense of being just, and we must be upright, which both Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to be. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلسُّبُلَ
فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

> "And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become *Al-Muttaqūn* (the pious)." (Qur'ān 6:153)

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[42] Related by Al-Bukhārī (516) in the chapter, "If one Carries a Young Female Child on his Neck During the Prayer." He related it elsewhere (5996) from the ḥadīth of Qatādah Al-Anṣārī (رضي الله عنه).

[43] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (5063) in the chapter, "Encouragement to Marry." Muslim related it (1401) in the chapter, "It is Recommended to Marry..." from the ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه).

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said to his Companions:

> "Do not praise me in the way that the Christians praised 'Īsa Ibn Maryam (ﷺ)."[44]

The Prophet (ﷺ) took pebbles while he (ﷺ) was traveling from Muzdalifah to Mina; he took handfuls of pebbles as he (ﷺ) was saying,

> "O people, with the likes of these should you throw (i.e., do not use large rocks), and beware of exceeding the proper bounds in the Religion."[45]

The Second Extreme: Negligence

There are those who are remiss in calling others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). One of them might find many suitable opportunities to make *da' wah*, but he wastes those opportunities, at times because the *Shayṭān* tells him that it is not the right time for *da' wah* or that people will not accept from him, or other excuses that the *Shayṭān* casts into his heart.

When some people see a man sin – whether it is by abstaining from a compulsory deed or by perpetrating a forbidden deed – their reaction is that of disgust. They feel that they should stay away from him, feeling hopeless for his betterment – and this is a problem. Allāh (ﷻ) ordered us to be patient and to expect reward from Him (ﷻ):

فَٱصۡبِرۡ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡعَزۡمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسۡتَعۡجِل لَّهُمۡ

> Therefore be patient (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) as did the Messengers of strong will and be in no haste about them (disbelievers). (Qur'ān 46:35)

One must be patient, and if one is inflicted with any harm in the process, he should be patient for Allāh (ﷻ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) bled during *Jihād*, he (ﷺ) said:

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[44] Related by Al-Bukhāri (3445) in the chapter, "Allāh's saying: "And Mention in the Book (the Qur'ān, O Muḥammad (ﷺ), the story of) Maryam," from the ḥadith of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما).

[45] A portion of a ḥadith related by Al-Nisā'i (3057). Ibn Mājah related it (3029), and Aḥmad related it in his *Musnad* (1/215,347), from the ḥadīth of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما).

"Are you anything other than a finger that is bleeding, and what you encountered was in the way of Allāh."[46]

The kind of person we are discussing here is opposite of the one who is excessive, in that the former will see and hear matters that are contrary to Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, but will not invite people to uprightness; nor will he call upon them to desist from their disobedience of Allāh (ﷻ).

We even hear some people say, "We must not distinguish between those who affiliate themselves to Islām and who turn in prayer towards the *Qiblāh*. We must not differentiate between the innovator and the one who follows the Sunnah." No doubt, this is a grave mistake, for the truth must be distinguished from falsehood, and the people of the truth must be distinguished from the people of falsehood, until matters become clear. If everyone were to join together and say, "We all live under the shade of Islām," even though some of them are upon kinds of innovations that take them outside the fold of Islām, then no one who is sincere to Allāh, to His Book, to His Messenger, to the *Imāms* of the Muslims, and to the common Muslims would be pleased.

Some people have been endowed with the knowledge and *Baṣīrah* (the sure knowledge) with which they are able to invite to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), yet when they see people perpetrating sins, they fear that, if they clarify the truth, some of those people will curse them or speak rudely to them. And as a result, they become remiss in their duty to perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

The Criterion by which We Measure too much Severity or too much Leniency in Performing Da'wah to the Way of Allāh (ﷻ)

When those who are remiss in performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh see those who are just, those who adhere to the true principles of Allāh's Religion, they say, "These are the misguided ones. These are the extremists," even though the group they are criticizing is upon the truth.

And when the extravagant, immoderate ones look at those who are just, they say, "You are remiss in your duties; you have not established the truth, and you show no feeling when Allāh's set limits are transgressed."

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[46] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2802) in the chapter, "Whoever is Afflicted in the Way of Allāh." Muslim (1796) related it in the chapter, "What The Prophet (ﷺ) Met with in Terms of Harm Inflicted on Him from the *Mushrikīn* (Polytheists, Disbelievers) and the Hypocrites," from the ḥadīth of Jundub Ibn Sufyān (رضي الله عنه).

Because of these extreme ways of looking at matters, we must not measure harshness and undue softness based on the dictates of our desires or tastes; instead, we must realize that the true criterion is the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) as well as the guidance of his companions (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) delineated the true way to follow through his speech, his action, and his overall character.

At times, you might be confused and in a difficult position, not knowing whether the situation calls for sternness or for making matters easy, whether the overwhelming good lies in following one way or the other? In such situations, which path should you follow? Without a doubt, as a *dāʿī*, you must follow the path of making matters easy, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, the Religion is ease."

Upon sending Muʿādh (ﷺ) and Abū Mūsa Al-Ashʿarī (ﷺ) to Yemen, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Make matters easy and do not make matters difficult. Give glad tidings and do not drive [people] away."[47]

When a Jew passed by the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "*Al-Sām* (here, *Al-Sām* means death) upon you, O Muḥammad," ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ), who was with the Prophet (ﷺ) at the time, answered the Jew, "Upon you *Al-Sām* (death) and *Al-La'nah* (curse)." The Prophet (ﷺ) said to her:

> "Verily, Allāh is *Rafīq* (Kind, Merciful, Gentle), and He loves gentleness. And verily, Allāh gives for gentleness that which He does not give for harshness."

If we consider the last sentence of this ḥadīth – "Allāh gives for gentleness that which He does not give for harshness" – we come to know that whenever we must choose between being easy and kind and being stern, it is better for us to be easy and kind, hence trusting upon the saying of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ):

> "Verily, Allāh gives for gentleness that which He does not give for harshness."

Whoever wants to grasp this principle should test it out. As a caller, if you resort to severity, the one you are calling to will be repelled and will reciprocate your treatment with some harshness of his own. If he is a commoner (meaning not a student of knowledge or scholar), he will retort, "With me are scholars

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[47] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukharī (4341 and 4342) in the chapter, "Dispatching Abū Mūsa (ﷺ) and Mu'aath (ﷺ) to Yemen…" He also related it elsewhere in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim (1733) related it in the chapter, "The Order to Make Matters Easy and Avoiding Driving [People] away," from the ḥadīth of Abū Burdah (ﷺ).

who are more knowledgeable than you." And if he is a student of knowledge, he will debate with you even if he must do so with falsehood, which you see clearly and he sees clearly, but he is determined to overcome you in the argument, all because you did not show him kindness and gentleness. *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) must be performed with wisdom and fair preaching.

The truth is hidden from only one of two men: one who turns away or one who is proud. As for one who seeks the truth with submission, then he will for sure be guided to it.

Patterns of Immoderation from Certain People

The First Pattern:

One pattern of extremism or immoderation takes place at the hands of some fathers and mothers during these times we live in. When young males and females – and all praise is for Allāh – are inclined to follow the Sunnah as much as they are able to, some mothers and fathers set tough restrictions upon them, to the extent that they often forbid their children from performing good deeds, despite the fact that their children are not harmed by doing those good deeds. For example, a parent may say to his children, "Do not perform so many voluntary prayers; do not fast three days each month (the 13th, 14th, and 15th of each month)," or "Do not fast Mondays and Thursdays," or any other similar restrictions. Such acts of worship do not harm one's parents, nor do they prevent one from serving the needs of his parents; furthermore, by performing such deeds, one is not negatively affected in his mind, his body, or his studies. This holds true for both boys and girls.

I am afraid for such parents; afraid that they forbid their children from performing good deeds because they dislike the truth and the *Sharī'ah*, in which case they are in a dangerous situation. One's dislike of the truth and of the *Sharī'ah* might lead one to apostatizing, for Allāh (ﷻ) says:



That is because they hate that which Allāh (ﷻ) has sent down (this Qur'ān and Islāmic laws, etc.), so He has made their deeds fruitless. (Qur'ān 47:9)

And deeds are only made fruitless when one apostatizes from Islām. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ
مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ
أَعْمَـٰلُهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ

And whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the Hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever. (Qur'ān 2:217)

The Second Pattern

Conversely, there are children – both sons and daughters – who are severe with their families, whereby they do not show tolerance for matters that are permissible in Islām. Thus one wants his father, his mother, his brothers, and his sisters to be upon the level he is upon in terms of adherence to the Allāh's *Sharī'ah*. And this is incorrect.

If you see anyone from your family being remiss in acts of worship that are not compulsory but are recommended, you must not be severe with him. The same is true in matters wherein scholars differ: if someone from your family is acting according to the view of a scholar, you must not be severe with him.

Regardless of whether one is calling others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) or whether one is worshipping Allāh on a personal level, one must take a position between the extremes of extravagance and negligence, remaining upright upon the Religion of Allāh (ﷻ). Allāh (ﷻ) ordered us to do so in His saying:

۞ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ
وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ

He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and 'Īsa saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Unity as Opposed to Division is a Must

To establish the Religion means to apply it in an upright manner, according to what Allāh (ﷻ) legislated. And Allāh (ﷻ) has forbidden us from division because division poses a great threat to the Muslim Nation.

Division represents a painful and saddening situation:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡ

> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

When people are divided and when they dispute with one another, they lose courage, they fail, their strength departs, and they have no weight or importance.

Division among Muslims pleases the enemies of Islām, including those who ascribe themselves to Islām openly but inwardly harbour hatred towards Islām and those who are outwardly as well as inwardly enemies of Islām. These are the ones that ignite the flame of division, the ones who sow dissension among those who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). It is incumbent upon us to make a stand, resisting the plots of those who show enmity to Allāh (ﷻ), to His Messenger (ﷺ), and to His Religion. We must be as one hand – brothers united upon Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah, as were our pious predecessors in their methodology and in their *da'wah* to Allāh (ﷻ).

Division among Muslims is the greater joy of devils from mankind and the *jinn*, because devils do not want the people of truth to unite upon anything. They want Muslims to divide because they know that division destroys the strength that is realized through a unified stance – one of obedience to Allāh (ﷻ). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡ

> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَلَا
تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُواْ وَٱخۡتَلَفُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتُۚ
وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ ١٠٥

> And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment. (Qur'ān 3:105)

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ

> He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and 'Īsa saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Allāh (ﷻ) forbade us from becoming divided and clarified the detrimental consequences of division. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to truly be one Nation, upon one word, even if our views differ in certain issues or regarding certain means [of making *da'wah*]. Division is an evil that brings about weakness.

The Companions (ﷺ) differed among themselves in certain issues, but they were not divided, nor did they harbour enmity or hatred towards one another. Difference of opinion occurred among them even during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). For example, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to his Companions:

> "Let no one from you pray *'Aṣr*, except in Banī Quraydhah (i.e., until you reach Banī Quraydhah)."[48]

The Companions (ﷺ) were leaving Al-Madinah and heading to Banī Quraydhah. When the time for the *'Aṣr* prayer was drawing to an end, the Companions differed among themselves. Some among them said, "We will only pray [*'Aṣr*] in Banī Quraydhah, even if the sun sets, for the Messenger (ﷺ) said: 'Let no one from you pray *'Aṣr*, except in Banī Quraydhah.' So we say, 'We have heard and obeyed.'"

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[48] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (946) in the chapter, "The Seeker and that which is Sought..." Muslim (1770) related it as well, in the chapter, "Hastening To Attack..."from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn Amr (ﷺ). And this is the wording according to the narration of Muslim: "Let no one pray *Al-Ẓuhr*, except in Banī Quraydhah (i.e., until you reach Banī Quraydhah)."

Others among them said, "Verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) intended by that [statement] that we should hasten and travel quickly. Nonetheless, if the time for prayer draws near, we will pray it on time." News of what happened reached the Prophet (ﷺ), and he (ﷺ) did not censure any of them, nor did he scold anyone from the two groups for their particular interpretation of his (ﷺ) command. And they themselves did not become divided due to the different way in which each group understood the Prophet's ḥadīth. Similarly, it is compulsory upon us to not become divided; instead, we should be one Nation.

The solution to the problem of disunity lies in us following the way of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم). We should realize that differences that are brought about because of *Ijtihād* (deriving a ruling from revealed texts when revealed texts do not clearly establish a given ruling), in issues wherein *Ijtihād* is permissible, should not affect our unity in a negative way. In such issues, each one of us takes what he feels is supported by the strongest proofs, so none of us should feel any rancor for his brother; instead, we should praise our brother for following what he feels to be the strongest proof.

If one of us were to force another to take our opinion, then I, for instance, would not be more worthy of forcing my brother to accept my opinion than he is of forcing me to accept his opinion. Therefore, we should agree to disagree in issues wherein the disagreement is based on *Ijtihād* (the permissible kind, of course), so that we become united and so that good results.

If our intentions are pure and good, then the remedy for problems pertaining to disunity is easily applied. But if our intentions are not good and pure, with each person becoming self-absorbed in his opinions, while not caring about others, then success will become far off indeed.

Allāh (ﷻ) ordered His slaves to unite:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟

O you who believe! Fear Allāh (ﷻ) as He should be feared. And die not except in the state of Islām (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allāh (ﷻ). And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allāh (ﷻ) (i.e. this Qur'ān), and be not divided among yourselves. (Qur'ān 3:102,103)

A Useful Point

One might say, "If the one who disagrees with us is an innovator (i.e., one who innovates in the Religion), then how should we deal with him?"

My answer: Innovations are classified into two categories:

1) An innovation that makes its perpetrator a disbeliever

2) An innovation that does not make its perpetrator a disbeliever

Regardless of whether one – one from those who ascribe themselves to Islām – is upon the first or second kind of innovation, we must invite him to the truth, by means of clarifying the truth, and not by means of attacking the way he is following, which we only resort to after we come to know that he is too proud to accept the truth. Allāh (ﷻ) said to the Prophet (ﷺ):

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allāh (ﷻ), lest they insult Allāh (ﷻ) wrongfully without knowledge. (Qur'ān 6:108)

First, we call an innovator to the truth by clarifying it through the mention of proofs; after all, the truth is acceptable to those who are upon a sound and undistorted nature. If we find that an innovator persists upon falsehood because of his pride, we then move on to clarifying his falsehood.

As for breaking off ties with an innovator; doing so depends on his innovation. If his innovation takes him outside the fold of Islām, then it is obligatory upon us to disassociate ourselves from him. If his innovation is of a lesser kind, then we study his situation: if, by breaking off ties with him, there is some benefit to be achieved, then we break off ties with him. But if there is no benefit to be achieved by breaking off ties with him, we do not do so, because the basic principle in Islām is that it is forbidden to break ties with a believer. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"It is not permissible for a believing man to break off ties with his brother for more than three [days]."[49]

Therefore, it is forbidden to part company with a believer – even though he may be an evildoer – unless there is some benefit in doing so. If there is some benefit to be derived from breaking off all ties with him, then that is what we do, because doing so becomes a remedy. But if there is no benefit or if the innovator increases in his falsehood and rebelliousness due to our parting company from him, then the following rule applies: *As for a matter that is bereft of benefit, forsaking it becomes the [deed of] benefit.*

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[49] A portion of a ḥadith related by Al-Bukhāri (6077) in the chapter, "Breaking off all Ties." Muslim (2560) also related it in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Breaking off Ties for more than Three..." from the ḥadith of Abū Ayyūb Al-Anṣāri (ﷺ).

Section Three

Advice to the Youth of the Present-Day Islāmic Awakening

Questions and Answers

1- The Ruling of Inviting Others to the Way of Allāh

The Ruling of Inviting others to the Way of Allāh

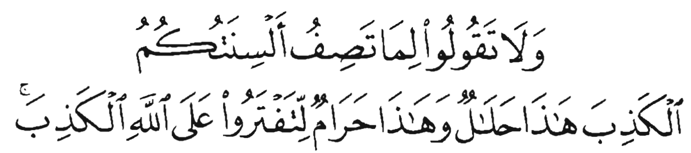
1) Is the responsibility of calling others to the way of Allāh an obligation upon every male and female Muslim? Or is it one that is limited to scholars and students of knowledge only? And is it permissible for the commoner to invite others to the Way of Allāh?

If one has sure knowledge about the matter that he is inviting others to follow, then there is no difference between him being an esteemed scholar, a serious student of knowledge, or even a commoner, for no matter which of the three he is, he must have sure knowledge of the particular issue he is calling to. The Messenger (ﷺ) said,

"Convey from me, even if it is a single verse."

There is no stipulation here – or elsewhere for that matter – that the caller must have a great deal of knowledge, but at the very least he must have knowledge about the matter that he is inviting others to follow. If one were to stand up, speaking about a matter out of ignorance, then what he is doing is in fact forbidden, even if he is prompted to speak by well-intended emotions.

This is why we find some brothers who, because of the dearth of knowledge they have with them, compounded by the strength of their zeal, forbid people from a practice that Allāh did not forbid, or command to an action that Allāh did not make compulsory upon his slaves. And this is a most dangerous matter, for prohibiting that which Allāh made lawful is just as grave a matter as is making permissible that which Allāh forbade. Allāh (ﷻ) says:



إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

> And say not concerning that which your tongues put forth falsely: "This is lawful and this is forbidden," so as to invent lies against Allāh (ﷻ). Verily, those who invent lies against Allāh (ﷻ) will never prosper. A passing brief enjoyment (will be theirs), but they will have a painful torment. (Qur'an 16: 116,117)

As for the commoner, he should not perform *da'wah* while he is bereft of knowledge; instead, gaining knowledge comes first, for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى

> Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge. (Qur'ān 12:108)

Therefore, one must invite to the Way of Allāh with sure knowledge, the exception being in regards to practices that are manifestly evil or manifestly good, in which case he may forbid what is evil and enjoin what is good.

Da'wah must be preceded by knowledge, for one who invites others without knowledge does more harm than good. Nonetheless, as we have just mentioned, the commoner may invite others to matters that are manifestly good, and he may forbid others from actions that are manifestly evil.

The Difference between the Scholar and the Caller (*Dā'ī*)

2) What is the difference between the scholar and the caller (the dā'ī)?

The difference between the two is clear. The caller is one who strives to convey the *Sharī'ah* to Allāh's slaves, inviting them to it, at times through encouraging words and promises of great reward, and at other times through warnings about Allāh's punishment.

The scholar is one whom Allāh (ﷻ) endowed with knowledge; he might be a caller, and he might not be a caller. And if he is not a caller, then he is severely deficient in his knowledge, not being from those who fully inherited from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). The Messengers (ﷺ) did not bequeath gold or silver; instead, all that they bequeathed was knowledge. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Verily, the scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets. Indeed, the Prophets did not bequeath any *Dīnars* or *Dirhams* (kinds of currency), but rather they only bequeathed knowledge: whoever takes it has taken an abundant share."[50]

Whoever gains knowledge and invites others to the way of Allāh has in the true sense inherited from the estate of the Messenger (ﷺ).

Some say that it is possible for one to invite others to the teachings of Islām without knowledge. If by that statement, they are referring to one who does not have a great deal of knowledge and is not able to issue Islāmic rulings or derive rulings from revealed texts, perhaps that is acceptable. But if the caller is inviting to something he has no knowledge about, then that should not be. I warn my brothers from calling to the truth in this manner, for one who does so causes more harm than good. And we can see many instances of this occurring in these times.

"Convey from Me, even if it is a Single Verse"

3) What is the correct understanding of the Prophet's saying, "Convey from me, even if it is a single verse"? I ask this because there are people who base the methodology of their da'wah upon this ḥadīth.

This ḥadith signifies the following: we should know for sure that what we are conveying is in fact from the speech of the Messenger (ﷺ), from his actions, or from his approvals, because he (ﷺ) said, " Convey from me," which clearly means that what we convey must correctly be ascribed to him. If one conveys a statement and ascribes it to the Messenger (ﷺ) when he (ﷺ) did not really say it, then one is, in reality, not conveying from him. Therefore, this ḥadith proves that it is forbidden to ascribe anything to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) when it is not authentically related from him.

"The Example of the Believers in their Mutual Love..."

4) Many callers mention the ḥadīth:

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[50] Related by Abū Dāwūd (3641). Ibn Mājah (223) related it in chapter 17. Al-Tirmidhi related it (2682) from the ḥadith of Abū Al-Dardā (رضي الله عنه). In *Sharḥ Al-Sunnah*, Al-Arnā'ūṭ said, "This ḥadith is *ḥasan*."

" Whoever does not concern himself with the affairs of the Muslims is not from them."[51]

Is this ḥadīth authentic?

This ḥadīth is well known among the people, and though I do not know whether or not it can correctly be ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ), the meaning it conveys is nonetheless correct. If one is not concerned over the affairs of the Muslims, then his Islām, in reality, is deficient, for in an authentically related ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

" The example of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion is that of a single body: if a limb from it is complaining (i.e., ailing), the rest of the body declines because of it into [a state of] fever and sleeplessness."[52]

And he (ﷺ) said:

"The example of a believer in relation to another believer is that of a building: parts of it strengthen its other parts."

These two *aḥādīth* and others like them convey the same meaning that the well-known ḥadīth you mentioned conveys. What I cannot recall at the present time is whether it is a saying of the Messenger (ﷺ) or a saying of one of the scholars.

It is not Permissible to Impute a Weak Ḥadīth to the Messenger (ﷺ)

5) May I relate stories I heard but am not sure about – whether they are authentic – in order to invite people to the way of Allāh? And what about stories I know to be fabricated? And what is the ruling in regards to relating aḥādīth when I do not know whether they are authentic or weak?

It is not permissible for the storyteller or the orator to relate a ḥadīth and then ascribe it to the Messenger (ﷺ) when he does not know that it is authentic. And it is certainly forbidden for one to relate a ḥadīth when one knows that it is weak, the exception being when he relates it to point out its weakness or to warn people about it, for doing so is compulsory. Similarly, one should not relate stories

[51] Refer to *Majma Al-Zawa'id* (10/248) and *Al-Dur Al-Manthūr* by Al-Suyūti (3/238). Al-Albānī ruled that this ḥadīth is weak. Refer to *Silsilat-al-Aḥādīth Al-Ḍa'īfah* (1/309-312).

[52] Related by Al-Bukhārī (6011) in the chapter, "The Mercy of People and Beasts." Muslim (2586) related it in the chapter, "The Mutual Mercy, Compassion, and Support of the Muslims," from the ḥadīth of Al-Nu'mān Ibn Bashīr (ﷺ).

without verifying them first, and one must definitely refrain from mentioning stories he knows to be fabrications, because mentioning them involves lying and deception.

He should Wait and not Rush

6) Some people push a person forward when he has just recently began adhering to the teachings of Islām, so that he stands before the people, admonishing them and reminding them of Allāh, when he himself was only recently from the people of frivolity and sinning. Is it correct for such a person to stand before the people as an orator, or should he wait until his faith strengthens, and then proceed to give sermons?

It is better for the person described to wait and not rush, but there is no harm in him standing before the people, speaking about Allāh's blessings, saying, for instance, "I was heedless and negligent, but then Allāh blessed me, and I found the taste of *Īmān* (faith)."

One must Invite others First and Foremost to *Tawḥīd* (Islāmic Monotheism)

7) Suppose we go to people who live in the desert and find that they are slaughtering animals for other than Allāh and are seeking judgement with their chiefs (and not in the Qur'ān and Sunnah). And suppose that they know very little about issues related to purity (i.e., ablution, removing impurities, etc.). What should our priorities be in inviting them to the Way of Allāh?

It is of primary importance for you to call them to *tawḥīd* (Islāmic Monotheism) and to warn and forbid them from *Shirk* (associating partners with Allāh in worship). When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (رضي الله عنه) to Yemen, he (ﷺ) said:

> "Let the first matter you call them to be the testimony, 'that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.'"

We must give preference to this over all other matters. Next, we should invite them to the prayer, to *Zakāt*, to fasting, to Ḥajj, and to the other legislations of the Religion.

He should Stay and Invite them unto Allāh (ﷻ)

8) If I want to make daʿwah to the people of a village, and I find in their Masjid a grave which they are seeking blessings from or which they are supplicating to instead of to Allāh, is it permissible for me to remain in the Masjid, pray in it, and then invite them to the way of Allāh? If the answer is no, then a great good will be forsaken; the good of guiding the people of that village.

The answer is yes, not 'no,' but the questioner should wait for an answer before giving one himself. Yes, he should stay, invite them unto Allāh (ﷻ), and warn them about the *Shirk* they are practising. He should order them to destroy the *Masjid* if it was built after the grave, in which case they should build another *Masjid* to replace it. If the *Masjid* was there before a grave was made in it, then it is sufficient for the corpse to be unearthed and then buried in a graveyard.

Is it permissible for me to stay in that Masjid? Is my prayer in it valid?

I have told you that you should invite the people, even from within that *Masjid*, to the truth, and you should warn them against falsehood. As for the ruling of praying in that *Masjid*, then the following explanation is needed. If the *Masjid* was built over a grave, then prayer in it is not valid, because its very construction is *Ḥarām* (forbidden). But if the building of the *Masjid* was there before a grave was made in it, then prayer in it is valid, as long as the grave is not at the Qiblāh of the *Masjid* (i.e., as long as it not in the front, whereby people face it in their prayer)."

2- Characteristics and Qualities of the Successful *Dāʿī*

The Characteristics that a *Dāʿī* (Caller) should Possess

The role of the *Dāʿī* is a leadership role that he must appreciate and live up to. In order to be successful in his *Daʿwah*, he must pay close attention to the following:

1) Sincerity to Allāh (ﷻ) in his actions: Through his efforts, the dāʿī (caller) should hope to achieve closeness to Allāh (ﷻ), victory for His Religion, and guidance for His slaves, by bringing them out of the darkness of ignorance and disobedience and into the light of knowledge and obedience. His daʿwah should be inspired by his love for Allāh, for His Religion, and for goodness to befall all of mankind. Daʿwah that issues forth from sincerity that is accompanied by strength, determination, and dependence upon Allāh necessarily bears its fruits.

Consider the story of Mūsa (عليه السلام) – when the people gathered for him, when the sun had risen on the day of their festival, and when Fir'aun devised his plot for him:

قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰ وَيْلَكُمْ لَا تَفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا فَيُسْحِتَكُم بِعَذَابٍ ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ افْتَرَىٰ ﴿٦١﴾

Mūsa said to them: "Woe unto you! Invent not a lie against Allāh (ﷻ), lest He should destroy you completely by a torment. And surely, he who invents a lie (against Allāh (ﷻ)) will fail miserably." (Qur'ān 20:61)

What did this phrase accomplish? It immediately had the effect of dividing their ranks:

فَتَنَٰزَعُوٓاْ أَمۡرَهُم بَيۡنَهُمۡ

Then they debated with one another what they must do. (Qur'ān 20:62)

To always dispute is one of the greatest causes of failure and of becoming weak. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡ

And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

The sincerity of the caller in his *da'wah* is just as germane to his being rewarded for his efforts as it is to him achieving success in his mission.

When one's intention is to show people his good deeds or to achieve something from the world – wealth or status or rank – then his efforts are wasted and his benefit is marginal. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ
ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيۡهِمۡ أَعۡمَٰلَهُمۡ فِيهَا وَهُمۡ فِيهَا لَا يُبۡخَسُونَ
﴿١٥﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَيۡسَ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارُۖ وَحَبِطَ
مَا صَنَعُواْ فِيهَا وَبَٰطِلٞ مَّا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

Whosoever desires the life of this world and its glitter; to them We shall pay in full (the wages of) their deeds therein, and they will have no diminution therein. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but Fire; and vain are the deeds they did therein. And of no effect is that which they used to do. (Qur'ān 11:15,16)

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) related that he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

"Verily, the first of the people to be judged on the day of Resurrection..."

He then mentioned the rest of the ḥadīth, in which the following is mentioned:

"And [another of the first ones who is judged] is a man who learned knowledge and [then] taught it, and he [would] read the Qur'ān. He will be brought, and Allāh will acquaint him with His Favours, and he will know and acknowledge them. Then Allāh (ﷻ) will say, 'What did you do for them?' He will say, 'I learned knowledge and I [then] taught it, and I [would] read the Qur'ān for You.' He (ﷻ) will say, 'You have lied. Instead, you learned knowledge so that it would be said: [He is] a scholar. And you

read the Qur'ān so that it would be said: [He is] a reciter. And that has indeed been said.' Then an order is made regarding him, and he is dragged on his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire." (Related by Muslim)

2) The caller (Dā' ī) should believe that, through his da' wah to the way of Allāh, he is an inheritor of Muḥammad (ﷺ): this sentiment should have the effect of encouraging him to follow the Prophet (ﷺ) in his da' wah, of encouraging him to be patient, desiring his reward from Allāh (ﷻ), so that he falls under the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me with sure knowledge. (Qur'ān 12: 108)

3) He should be steadfast and firm in calling to the way of Allāh: Hardship should not steer him away from his mission, and hopelessness should not overcome him. The true dā' ī is confident about the path he is treading, and he is always hoping for positive results. He is confident regarding two matters and hopeful for a third - confident that he is conveying the truth and that he will be rewarded in the hereafter as long as his intention and his deeds are good, hopeful that the people will be guided through his da' wah, whether this occurs at a near or distant time.

4) He should be patient and steadfast: The caller must patiently endure any harm that is inflicted upon him by the people, for whenever one assumes the role of the dā' ī, harm will necessarily befall him, the source of which are those that are opposed to the truth. The harm they inflict can be verbal in nature but it can be physical as well. The caller does well to remember that such harm was inflicted on the Prophet (ﷺ) and on the noble Messengers before him:

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ
رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا۟ وَأُوذُوا۟ حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَىٰهُمْ نَصْرُنَا ۚ
وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ

Verily, (many) Messengers were denied before you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), but with patience they bore the denial, and they were hurt, till Our help reached them, and none can alter the Words (Decisions) of Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 6:34)

Patience is a lofty level that is achieved only through the bearing of much hardship.

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

> Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning. (Qur'ān 39:10)

It is important for the *dā' ī* to be steadfast in his patience, farsightedness and determination until his goals are realized.

5) The *dā' ī must tread the path of wisdom in his da' wah. This means that, for every situation, he must resort to the most suitable methods and words. People are not of one level in their understanding and knowledge, nor are they equally open to change. Some people easily submit to the truth while others haughtily reject it. Adopt a suitable approach for each individual, and your message is more likely to be accepted, simply because you will have called to the way of Allāh with wisdom. The dā' ī must be flexible and willing to bear hardship. Instead of forsaking someone he sees upon misguidance, thus effectively leaving him to the Shayṭān, he should reach out to that person with encouraging words. How many people seemed to be almost beyond reform, but then Allāh (ﷻ) guided them?*

The caller should realize that, were he to be harsh in his *da' wah*, the evildoer would only increase in his falsehood and in his disdain for the truth; hence it is from wisdom that he does not deal harshly with him. Allāh (ﷻ) guided us to this principle in His saying:

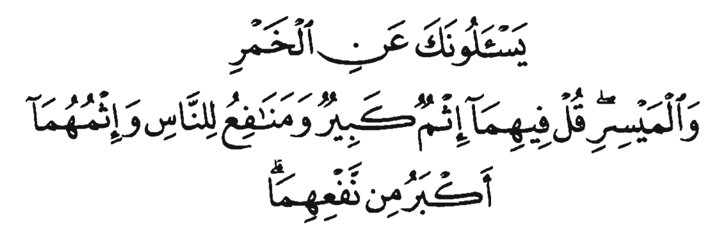
وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَّا
لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ

> And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allāh (ﷻ), lest they insult Allāh (ﷻ) wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings. (Qur'an 6:108)

The caller should remind the evildoer of the truth and encourage him to follow it with kind words, so that he reaches the depths of his heart, thus facilitating the process whereby the evildoer abandons his evil.

To leave what has become customary is hard upon people and requires a great deal of struggle. Consider Allāh's wisdom in legislating the prohibition of

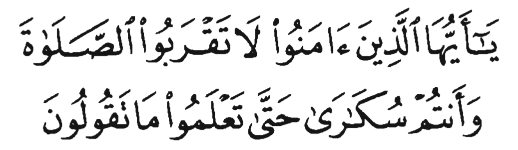
alcohol, the drinking of which was customary for the people. It was forbidden in stages; the first stage occurring when the believers had asked about it:



They ask you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater then their benefit." (Qur'ān 2:219)

Allāh (ﷻ) did not say *Manfa'ah* (benefit) in the singular, but instead He (ﷻ) said *Manāfai'* (benefits), so that the word becomes comprehensive of everything that actually is a benefit or is imagined to be a benefit. Yet all of those benefits become small when compared to the great sin that is involved in drinking alcohol. This verse reveals the reality of alcohol, and every person who contemplates it should be moved to refrain from drinking it. Although drinking alcohol is not explicitly prohibited in this verse, one is made to realize that the sin of drinking it is greater than the benefit derived thereby. Furthermore, this verse does in fact suggest the prohibition of alcohol, if only implicitly, for one of the principles of the *Sharī'ah* is that something is *Ḥarām* (forbidden) when its harm outweighs its benefit. Hence, people were made to realize that it was going to become forbidden, so when the prohibition actually took effect, people were prepared for it and the path was made easy for them to accept the new ruling.

The second stage - the prohibition of coming near the prayer while one is in a state of drunkenness:



O you who believe! Approach not the prayer when you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter. (Qur'ān 4:43)

At the very least, this indicates that people should stay away from it during five periods of the day (for the obligatory prayers). Thus, people became accustomed to staying away from it for certain periods at a time, and that made it easier for them to completely quit thereafter.

The third stage involved staying away from alcohol at all times and in all situations. From the last verses of the Qur'ān that were revealed are some verses in *Surāt al-Mā'idah*, among which are the following two:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْخَمْرُ وَٱلْمَيْسِرُ وَٱلْأَنصَابُ وَٱلْأَزْلَٰمُ رِجْسٌ
مِّنْ عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَٱجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ
وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

> O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kind of alcoholic drinks), gambling, *Al-Anṣāb*, and *Al-Azlām* (arrows for seeking luck and decision) are an abomination of *Shayṭān's* handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. *Shayṭān* (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allāh (ﷻ) and from *Al-Ṣalāt* (the prayer). So will you not then abstain? (Qur'ān 5:90,91)

After the road to prohibition became paved, the Companions (ﷺ) were ready, so that it became easy for them to completely abstain from alcohol. Allāh, how perfect He is! The Most Wise, the Most Merciful.

The tribe of Thaqīf pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), but they stipulated that they be exempted from giving charity and from *Jihād*. The Prophet (ﷺ) accepted this from them, and he (ﷺ) said,

> "They will give charity, and they will perform *Jihād*."[53]

He (ﷺ) said this, knowing that when *Īmān* (faith) enters the heart, it follows that the believer will apply all of Islam's legislations. The stronger one's *Īmān*, the stronger and more completely he will apply the compulsory aspects of *Īslam* as well as those aspects that complete one's *Īmān*.

6) The dā'ī should possess knowledge of Allāh's Sharī'ah, which he is inviting others to follow. Furthermore, he should know the mental state of the people he is inviting, their level of knowledge, and their level of practising Islām.

The *dā'ī* must possess knowledge of Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, so that he will be inviting to the way of Allāh with clear proofs and sure knowledge, effectively saving himself from becoming misguided and from misguiding others. Hence, he will fall under the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

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[53] Related by Abū Dāwūd (3025); Aḥmad related it in his *Musnad* (3/341), from the ḥadīth of Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh (ﷺ).

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me. (Qur'ān 12:108)

Upon sure knowledge, the *dā'ī* is able to defend his *da'wah* and convince his audience.

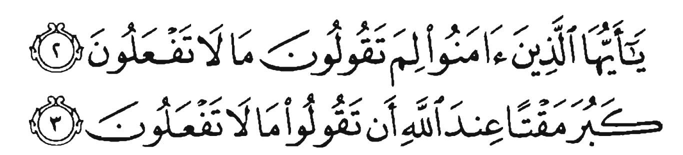
We know of many callers who were ignorant, and as a result, much harm befell not only them but also those they were inviting. The ignorant caller is easily overcome by falsehood because of the dearth of knowledge he has regarding the truth. Therefore, just as it is forbidden to furnish opportunities for children to perform *Jihād*, it is wrong for us to furnish opportunities for ignorant people to perform *da'wah*.

In order to suit the needs of every person he is inviting, the *dā'ī* should be aware of an individual's mental state, level of knowledge, and level of practising Islām. When he sent Mu'ādh (رضي الله عنه) to Yemen, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him,

"Verily, you are going to people who are from the People of the Book."

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed him of their situation so that he could be better prepared for conveying his message. If the caller does not know the state of those he is inviting, his lack of knowledge can have a very negative impact on his *da'wah*; for example, because he is ignorant of their situation, he may begin with matters of lesser significance, leaving matters of utmost importance that urgently need to be addressed.

7) The dā'ī should himself be practising the Religion, and he should have good manners, so that he becomes a good example in his knowledge and in his deeds. He should apply those teachings that he invites others to apply – in terms of good deeds – and he should stay away from matters that he forbids others from – in terms of sins and base actions. It is not from the Religion to do the opposite, for Allāh (ﷻ) says:

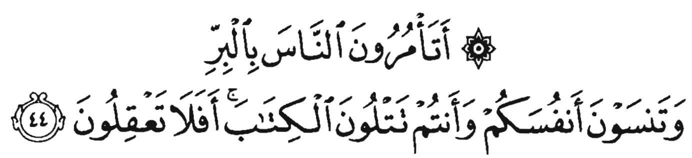


O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allāh (ﷻ) that you say that which you do not do. (Qur'ān 61:2,3)

Usāmah Ibn Zayd (رضي الله عنه) related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be thrown into the Hellfire. His bowels will fall out, and he will go around them like a donkey goes around its hand mill (the literal meaning here is hand mill, but the intended meaning is the post to which a donkey is tied). The people of the Hellfire will gather to him and say, 'O so and so, did you not order us to do good and forbid us from evil?' He will say, 'I used to order you to do good, but I would not do it myself, and I used to forbid you from evil, but I would come to it (evil) myself.'"[54]

For one to abstain from what he enjoins or for one to perpetrate that which he forbids is not only contrary to the teachings of Islām, but also to common sense. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



Enjoin you *Al-Birr* (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allāh (ﷻ)) on the people and you forget (to practice it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture! *Have you then no sense?* (Qur'ān 2:44)

One invites others to a practice either:

- because he is convinced of its benefits and merits, in which case he inflicts harm upon himself when he does what he forbids, and loses out on benefit when he refrains from doing what he enjoins. In both instances, he is going against sound reasoning, for the one possessed of a sound mind does not miss out on opportunities of benefit and does not inflict harm upon his own self.
- or because of some ulterior motive; meanwhile, he himself is not convinced of the merits and benefits of following what he is inviting others to follow. This is certainly the graver offence. He is expending efforts towards a cause he does not believe in. And if he is making *da'wah* for show, then he deceives only his own self. Whatever fame he is trying to achieve will quickly die out and his situation will be exposed. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

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[54] Related by Al-Bukhārī (3267) in the chapter, "The Description of the Hellfire, and it has been Created." Muslim (2989) related it in the chapter, "The Punishment of One who Enjoins good but does not Perform it..."

فَأَمَّا ٱلزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَآءً ۖ وَأَمَّا مَا يَنفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ

> Then as for the foam it passes away as scum upon the banks, while that which is for the good of mankind remains in the earth. (Qur'ān 13:17)

A poet said:

> "The garment of *Riyā'* (doing deeds for show) is transparent, revealing what is underneath it, so that, if you attire yourself with it, you are in reality naked."

For the *dā'ī* to be negligent in obedience to Allāh is not the same as anyone else being negligent in the same regard, because the former is an example for the people. Whenever people see him being negligent, they become like him or even more derelict than him. This is why a recommended practice might be considered to be compulsory for the *dā'ī*, in situations wherein the acceptance and application of a given Sunnah depends on him performing it. Likewise, for a *dā'ī* to perpetrate acts of disobedience to Allāh is not like another person doing the same, because people follow the former, and so his perpetration of a sin will cause it to spread, and as a result, an evil practice might be transformed in the eyes of the people, becoming an acceptable practice, all because of the *dā'ī's* initial offence. This is why a *makrūh* (disliked, but not forbidden) practice might be considered as *Ḥarām* (forbidden) upon the *dā'ī*, in situations wherein his performance of it leads to the people believing in its permissibility.

Hence, we see that there is a great trust and responsibility upon the *dā'ī*. We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to help us all and to guide us, so that we fulfill our duties in a way that pleases Him. Indeed, He (ﷻ) is Most Generous, Most Kind.

8) The dā'ī should be dignified in his demeanor and comportment. He should be dignified in his speech and action, without being harsh, dry, or unapproachable. When the dā'ī is dignified in all aspects of his character, people of base character and free time will not belittle him, and the sincere ones will not take him lightly. The dā'ī must be serious when it is time to be serious, and he should only joke when it is time for joking. He should speak if doing so is better, and remain silent when there is no good to be derived from speaking. Along with being dignified in his demeanor, the dā'ī should be approachable, easy in his dealings with people, cheerful in his countenance, so that the people do not disperse from him. There are many callers whose cheerful countenance and easy manners have helped bring many people into the fold of Islām.

The *Dā'ī* in the Full Sense of the Word must Possess Extensive Knowledge

9) Is it compulsory upon the dā'ī to be very knowledgeable?

The word *dā'ī*, by its very definition, signifies a person whose main calling in life is to invite others to the way of Allāh, and one of this description must in fact have a great deal of knowledge.

Nonetheless, if one is inviting others to a specific matter, for instance, to attend the congregational prayer, then it is enough for him to know that attending the congregational prayer is compulsory and that staying behind from it constitutes an act of disobedience to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ) and means that one is forsaking the way of the believers. 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) described the believers in relation to the congregational prayer:

> "No one stays behind from it except for the hypocrite or the sick person, and a [sick] man would be brought and placed between two men, so that he would stand in the row."[55]

As long as you know the revealed texts that speak about the congregational prayer, and as long as you have sure knowledge about the issue of congregational prayer, you may make *da'wah* to a person who is negligent in attending it. But you must not warn people about perpetrating acts you deem to be forbidden when you are not sure about the actual Islāmic ruling in regards to those acts.

What is important to understand here is that a person who dedicates much of his time to inviting others to the way of Allāh must have a great deal of knowledge; on the other hand, if one is inviting to specific matters which pertain to the teachings of Islām, then he is required to have full knowledge about those matters only. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Convey from me, even if it is a single verse."

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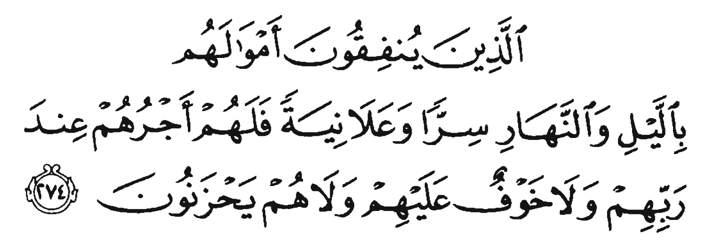
[55] A portion of a ḥadith related by Muslim (654) in the chapter, "The Congregational Prayer is From the Sunan (Plural of Sunnah) of Guidance," from the ḥadith of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه).

The Believer should be Sincere to Allāh (ﷻ)

10) A man performs good deeds and strives to keep them hidden from people, fearing the consequences of doing deeds for show (Al-Riyā'), but at the same time he becomes inwardly happy when someone else learns of a good deed he performed. Is this Riyā' (doing deeds for show, which the Prophet (ﷺ) warned against)? And is it Riyā' to refrain from performing good deeds in the presence of others?

The believer must sincerely perform his deeds for Allāh (ﷻ), and he must not succumb to thoughts that accuse him of being a *Murā'ī* (one who does deeds for show, for the approval and praise of others), for otherwise he will abandon many good deeds.

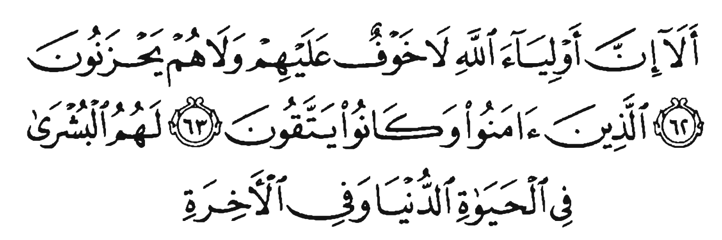
The sincere believer is one who openly performs good deeds at times and conceals them at other times, depending on which is better in a given situation. That is why Allāh (ﷻ) praised those who give charity from their wealth both secretly and openly. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



Those who spend their wealth (in Allāh's Cause) by night and day, in secret and in public, they shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (Qur'ān 2:274)

The overweighing benefit might be in secrecy and it might be in openness. My Muslim brother, it is up to you to decide which is better and then to do it. And stay far away from *Riyā'*.

And if you feel happiness after doing an act of worship, which you did for Allāh (ﷻ), then that does not harm you; it can even be a form of glad tidings for a believer, about which Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> No doubt! Verily, the friends of Allāh (ﷻ), no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve. Those who believed, and used to fear Allāh (ﷻ) much. For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present world, and in the Hereafter. (Qur'ān 10:62-64)

There is a marked difference between one who performs a deed so that other people will see him and praise him and another man who does a deed for Allāh, but when people notice him doing it, he becomes happy. His happiness is for Allāh's favours and blessings upon him, in which case his happiness does not harm him in any way.

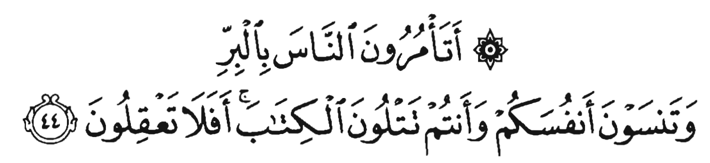
If one leaves off a good deed sometimes, fearing that he will fall into *Riyā'*, then this at times can be from the *Shayṭān*, who casts his whispers into the heart of man so as to prevent him from doing good deeds. Therefore, you must continue to perform acts of worship, even if it comes across your mind that you are doing them for show. If that happens, say, "I seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed *Shayṭān*." Seek help from Allāh (ﷻ) and continue to worship Him.

It is Obligatory for a *Dā'ī* to be a Good Example

11) What is the ruling regarding the dā'ī who invites others to apply a practice, but is not able to apply it himself?

The *dā'ī* must be a good example to those he is addressing, so if he guides others to a good deed, he should be the first to perform it. And if he forbids others from an evil deed, he should be the first to abstain from it.

Nonetheless, it might happen that one invites others to a good deed, but then deems it better to perform an even better deed, and there is nothing wrong in that. But when that is not the case, when there is no better deed that he is busy performing, he should beware of becoming from those about whom Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> Enjoin you goodness on the people and you forget (to practice it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture! Have you then no sense? (Qur'ān 2:44)

And he should beware of becoming like the man who:

> "will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and will be thrown into the Hellfire. His bowels will fall out, and he will go around them like a donkey

> goes around its hand mill (the literal meaning here is hand mill, but the intended meaning is the place wherein a donkey is tied). The people of the Hellfire will gather to him and say, 'O so and so, did you not order us to do good and forbid us from evil?' He will say, 'I used to order you to do good, but I would not do it myself, and I used to forbid you from evil, but I would come to it (evil) myself.'"

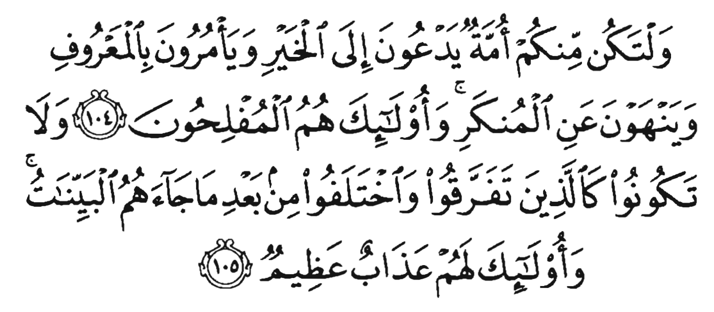
We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to protect us from such ignominy.

One should be extremely cautious in this matter. That being said, we do not say, "If you do not perform a good deed, you should not order others to perform it." Rather, we say, "If you do not perform a good deed, you have excluded yourself from what is good, but do not exclude yourself from another good, which is, ordering others to what is good."

You must Enjoin what is Good and Forbid what is Evil

12) I am a man who prays and recites the Qur'ān; I also perform other good deeds; however, I do not enjoin what is good or forbid what is evil. Please advise me?

Over and above the good you are doing, I advise to do even more good: order others to perform good deeds and forbid them from perpetrating evil deeds, for by doing so, you will have obeyed Allāh and His Messenger's command:


وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ ۚ
وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

> Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islām), enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. And it is they who are the successful. And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment. (Qur'ān 3:104,105)

Contemplate the fact that Allāh (ﷻ) said this:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟

And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves. (Qur'ān 3: 105),

after He (ﷻ) said:

وَلۡتَكُن مِّنكُمۡ أُمَّةٞ يَدۡعُونَ إِلَى ٱلۡخَيۡرِ

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islām). (Qur'ān 3:104)

This informs us that division and discord inevitably occur when people do not enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. When people are left to sin, without someone forbidding them, and are left to refrain from good deeds, without someone directing them to perform those deeds, people will become divided and they will differ among themselves.

I advise you to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil as much as you possibly can, for these two practices are from the most important of obligatory acts in Allāh's Religion.

Allāh (ﷻ) mentioned that we are superior over other Nations because we enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. He (ﷻ) said:

كُنتُمۡ خَيۡرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخۡرِجَتۡ لِلنَّاسِ تَأۡمُرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ
وَتَنۡهَوۡنَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَتُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ

You are the best of people ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and you believe in Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 3:110)

Allāh (ﷻ) said about the children of Israel:

لُعِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُواْ مِنۢ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُۥدَ وَعِيسَى
ٱبۡنِ مَرۡيَمَۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَواْ وَّكَانُواْ يَعۡتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾
كَانُواْ لَا يَتَنَاهَوۡنَ عَن مُّنكَرٖ فَعَلُوهُۚ لَبِئۡسَ
مَا كَانُواْ يَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dāwūd and 'Īsa, son of Maryam. That was because they disobeyed and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from the evil which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do. (Qur'ān 5:78,79)

Humility is a Must in Conveying the Truth

13) Some callers invite to the truth in such a manner that it almost seems as if they are begging others to accept guidance – what is the ruling regarding this approach to making da'wah? And what then is your view regarding the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

يَٰيَحْيَىٰ خُذِ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِقُوَّةٍ

(It was said to his son): "O Yaḥya! Hold fast the Scripture [the *Taurat* (Torah)]" (Qur'ān 19:12)

The questioner described some *du'āt* (callers), saying that they invite people with such humility that it almost seems as if they are begging for money from them. This might be due to weakness in their *da'wah* and their personalities, but it might also be due to stubbornness on the part of the one who is being invited. In this latter case, the caller does not necessarily have a weak personality or a weak method of calling; it may be that the situation of the person being invited demands that the caller be patient and gentle. If this is so, we cannot judge the caller being described by saying that he is negligent or lacking, either in his personality or in his method of calling.

As a rule, one should be firm and strong in his *da'wah*, always using his firmness in proportion to what is appropriate to the circumstances. As for your other question, every single person should hold fast to Allāh's Book. Allāh (ﷻ) said the following about the Children of Israel:

خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم

Hold fast to that which we have given you. (Qur'ān 2:63)

In fact, Allāh (ﷻ) raised a mountain over them in order to bind them to that:

وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا ٱلْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُۥ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُۥ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ
خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ

And remember when We raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy, and they thought that it was going to fall on them. (We said): "Hold firmly to what We have given you [i.e. the *Taurat* (Torah)]. (Qur'ān 7:171)

In general, then, one should be firm and strong in his *da'wah*, but some situations call for humility on the part of the caller – when, for instance, the truth is better conveyed or when the other person is more likely to accept it.

The Effects of Hypocrisy and *Al-Riyā'* (Doing Deeds for Show) upon the *Dā῾ī* (Caller)

14) What is the difference between nifāq (hypocrisy) and al-riyā' (doing deeds for show)? And which of the two is more harmful to the Muslim dā῾ī?

Both *al-nifāq* and *al-riyā'* are evil, but the former is the greater evil.

Al-Nifāq is for one to outwardly manifest goodness when he inwardly harbours malice and evil; this can occur in beliefs or in actions. Hypocrisy in belief takes one outside of the Religion – and we seek refuge in Allāh – whereas hypocrisy in actions might or might not – depending on the situation – take one outside of the Religion.

Al-Riyā' occurs when one does a good deed for Allāh (ﷻ), but he shows it off, improving or calling attention to his deed so that the people praise him for it. He wants to do well, but he notices people watching him and consequently wants to improve his deed.

Thus it becomes clear that *al-nifāq* (hypocrisy) is worse; nonetheless, it must be noted that *al-riyā'* is one of the signs or qualities of the hypocrites, regarding whom Allāh (ﷻ) said:

يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

And to be seen of men, and do not remember Allāh (ﷻ) but little. (Qur'an 4:142)

The Effects of Praying in the Night upon the Muslim *Dā῾ī*

15) Considering how important it is for the Muslim dā῾ī (caller) to pray late in the night, we hope that you can give us some encouraging words about the significance of the late-night prayer, by clarifying the benefits one derives from consistently performing this noble act of worship?

In truth, the place for exhorting Muslims to pray late in the night is a book on *Al-Targhīb* and *Al-Tarhīb* (i.e., a book wherein the virtues and merits of certain good deeds or the consequences and punishments of certain evil deeds are expounded upon).

Allāh (ﷻ) said:

تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allāh's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do. (Qur'ān 32:16,17)

This verse in and of itself is enough to motivate a Muslim to stand in the night to pray. At the same time, we should keep in mind that the ruling for praying in the night differs from person to person. For some people, standing late in the night to pray is better; for others, to do otherwise is better.

Some people spend the first part of the night studying religious knowledge – through memorization, learning, or teaching. The Prophet (ﷺ) approved of some his Companions doing this; one such example is Abū Hurayrah (ؓ), whom the Prophet (ﷺ) advised to perform the *Witr* Prayer before he slept.[56]

For someone not of the above description, it is better to sleep early, and then stand up late in the night to pray. Then, he should prolong his recitation, pausing to ask at a verse wherein Allāh's mercy is mentioned, and pausing to seek refuge at a verse wherein Allāh's punishment is mentioned. He should pray in this manner if doing so helps him to concentrate better and if his heart is more awake and alive during the prayer. But if these results are better achieved when he does not prolong his recitation, but his bowing and his prostration, then he should prolong the time he spends in those positions. If neither of the two ways is palpably better than the other, then one should bow and perform prostration for

[56] Related by Al-Bukhari in the chapter, "The *Ḍuḥā* Prayer for the Resident." He related it elsewhere as well (1981). Muslim related it (721) in the chapter, "The Recommended Nature of Praying *Al-Ḍuḥā*..." The wording of the ḥadith in *Al-Bukhārī* is as follows: Abū Hurayrah (ؓ) said, "My *Khalīl* (one who is given extra special love; here, he is referring to the Prophet (ﷺ)) with three [practices]: fasting three days from every month; the two units of *Al-Ḍuḥā*; and for me to pray the *Witr* Prayer before I go to sleep."

approximately the same duration as he stands, so if he prolongs his recitation, he should also prolong his bowing and prostrating. And conversely, if he shortens the former, he should shorten his bowing and prostrating. And his last prayer during the night should be the *Witr* Prayer.

The Ruling for Listening to Islāmic *Anāshīd*

16) Is it permissible for the Dā'ī to listen to Islāmic Anāshīd?

Long ago, I would listen to islāmic *anāshīd* (words that have a good meaning and that are read in a melodious way, without the use of musical instruments), finding nothing wrong in them. But when I heard *anāshīd* in recent times, I found that they were performed melodiously, in the way of songs that are accompanied by music. Upon this form, my view is that one should not listen to it.

As for when a *nashīd* (singular of *anāshīd*) is spontaneous and is not composed to be read in a melodious, song-like manner, then there is no harm in listening to it, but with the condition that one does not make it a custom, listening to it all the time.

Another condition is that one's heart should not benefit solely from *anāshīd*, whereby he finds guidance only in *anāshīd*; this occurs when one listens to them all the time, in which case he is leaving what is more important, and that is the message and admonition of Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah. If one listens to Islāmic *anāshid* sometimes or if he listens to them, for instance, when driving long distances in order to pass away the hours of his journey, then there is no harm in that.

It is Forbidden for the *Da'ī* to Watch Programs that have Music in them or Women that are not Dressed Properly

17) Is it permissible for the dā'ī to watch programs that have music in them and women that are not dressed properly?

When such a program is displayed in the presence of a *dā'ī*, he should repudiate it and not watch it, for music is *Ḥarām* (forbidden) – and it is sad to say that it has become prevalent in our times. One of the proofs that establish its prohibition is the ḥadīth of Abū Mālik Al-Ash'arī (ﷺ), which is related in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*. In it, the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"There will be people from my Nation who will deem fornication, [wearing] silk [for men], alcohol, and musical instruments to be lawful."[57]

Fornication, men wearing silk, and alcohol – the prohibition of these is known to each one of us. Likewise, musical instruments are prohibited.

Scholars have said that all musical instruments are forbidden except for the *duff* (a small kind of drum), for wedding days, for when someone is returning from a journey, or for other similar occasions. All other musical instruments are *Ḥarām* (forbidden). Consequently then, watching even educational movies that contain music is *Ḥarām*.

The questioner also brought up the issue of programs that have women in them. If watching such programs arouses one's desire or if pleasure is derived from looking at the women, then, no doubt, watching is *Ḥarām* (forbidden). But if pleasure and desire are not involved, then I hesitate to issue a ruling in the matter, though there are many among our brothers who do say that, "Watching programs with women in them is categorically forbidden."

The Best Book that the *Dā῾ī* can Study and Concentrate on is Allāh's Book

18) What are some books that are useful to the Dā῾ī, of course after Allāh's Book?

The best book that one can devote his attention to is Allāh's Book – reciting it, learning its teachings, and then applying them. The Companions (ﷺ) would not go beyond ten verses of the Qur'ān until they learned them, and for them that meant learning their meanings and applying their commands. Learning the Qur'ān for them was a process of learning and applying.

Next in importance is the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ), followed by explanations of Sunnah compilations, such as *Fatḥ-al-Bārī*, *Nayl Al-Awtār*, and *Subul al-Salām*.

Then one should devote his time to what the trustworthy scholars wrote, scholars such as Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, his student, Ibn Al-Qayyim, Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn ῾Abdul-Wahhāb, and many others from the

[57] Related by Al-Bukhārī (5590) in the chapter, "What has been Related Regarding those who Deem Alcohol to be Lawful, Calling it by Other than its True Name."

people of knowledge, who are known for their abundant knowledge and for their fear of Allāh (ﷻ). Therefore, one should gradually proceed in learning, moving successively from most important to next important.

In my View, One should Combine between both Good Qualities

19) Many students of knowledge are loath to read books by contemporary du'āt (callers), deeming it sufficient to read the books of our pious predecessors – may Allāh have mercy on them. What is your view regarding this attitude?

In my view, one should take his knowledge first and foremost from Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). This, without a doubt, is a view we all share. Anything related from the rightly guided *Khalīfahs*, from the Companions, and from the earlier *Imāms* of Islām comes next in importance.

Nonetheless, there are matters that recent and contemporary scholars are better versed in. I am referring to matters that have come to pass in recent times only, specific matters that our pious predecessors never even came across. If one takes from contemporary scholars in these matters, then that is correct. As for everything else in the Religion, contemporary scholars have taken their knowledge from the Imāms of the earlier generations. Then let us take from the same sources that they took from.

In my view, then, the student should vary his reading, depending:

- First, on Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah.
- Second, on the sayings of our pious predecessors: the rightly-guided *Khalīfahs*, the Companions, and the *Imāms* of the early generations.
- Third, on what contemporary scholars have written, regarding matters that are new in their form or substance, matters that were not specifically known among our predecessors.

3- Calling to Islām and Seeking Knowledge

Should One Seek Out Knowledge or Call Others to Islām?

20) Which is better – seeking Islāmic knowledge or inviting others to Islām? When answering this question, please keep in mind that I am referring to a specific person who is knowledgeable regarding those matters he is inviting others to follow?

It is essential for one to have knowledge, but at the same time we should remember that people differ, each one having his specialty or field in which he wants to excel. Some students of knowledge expend most of their efforts in studying *aqīdah* (Islāmic belief), reading any *'aqīdah* book they can get their hands on. Another student might prefer *fiqh* (Islāmic Jurisprudence), and yet another might prefer to concentrate his efforts on making *da'wah*, on enjoining good and forbidding evil. That people differ in their tastes and inclinations and talents is from the blessings of Allāh (ﷻ). Had people all preferred the same sphere of study, there would have been a void in many areas. If one sees that he can excel in studying knowledge in a thorough manner, then my view is that he should remain a student of knowledge, not entering the sphere of *da'wah* until he can better benefit others. Muslim countries are being attacked by outsiders in every sphere – including *aqīdah*, our manners, and so on – so if one does not have a solid grounding in the fundamental principles of the *Sharī'ah* and its logical proofs, he may end up going astray.

At this opportunity, I would like to encourage students of knowledge to gain some knowledge that pertains to logical proofs. Why? Because of their weak faith, people today are more easily convinced by what is palpable and tangible than by Islāmic proofs. I call upon my brothers among students of knowledge to study logical proofs, to study the rationale behind certain legislations and beliefs. If anyone wants to correct me on this point, he needs to refer to the writings of Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, particularly those writings wherein he refuted philosophers, logicians, and others of their like. If students today were to refer

to his work, they would find that he spoke by the Islāmic proof and by the proof of sound reasoning.

If one is not able to delve into knowledge, he should devote himself to inviting others to Islām, but he should only invite them to matters about which he possesses full knowledge. He should not surmise and guess, mentioning *aḥādīth* that are weak or fabricated, simply because he wants to stimulate the emotions of the people and make them cry. It is a mistake to guide people through weak or fabricated narrations. It is true that some scholars ruled that it is permissible to mention weak *aḥādīth* in the realm of *faḍāil* and *zawājir* (virtues and warnings, i.e., narrations that speak about the virtues of good deeds or narrations that warn against evil deeds, perhaps by mentioning the punishment for those who perpetrate them), but only if three conditions are fulfilled:

1) The weakness should not be severe.
2) What is mentioned in the narration should have a sound basis.
3) The one who is mentioning it should not believe that it is authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ).

People differ: some are inclined to become experts in certain fields of study while others are not able to do so. Each person has a domain that is suited to him; in it he strives hard to excel.

It is not Permissible for One to Talk about Allāh's Religion without Knowledge

21) There is a group of people that performs da'wah to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām) through visiting people and inviting them to the Masājid. What advice do you give them, considering that some of them do not possess any knowledge?

In regards to bettering and reforming the people, I think that the *dā'ī* should use methods that are best suited to each situation, as long as the method used is not itself prohibited.

As for forbidden methods and means, it is not permissible to employ them; for example, one cannot use dancing and music as a means of attracting people to him so that he can invite them to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām), because those acts are *Ḥarām* (forbidden). Furthermore such a practice – of using *Ḥarām* methods – will not actually bring about any benefit, for Allāh (ﷻ) did not place the cure for this Nation in matters that He forbade.

In performing *Da'wah*, one may employ different means and methods to convey the truth, so long as they are not themselves forbidden. This is because methods are not in and of themselves worship, but rather they are ways that lead to an intended aim. For example, if one visits others in their homes and reads to them the Qur'ān and sayings of the Prophet (ﷺ), all for the purpose of guiding them, then that is, no doubt, correct and good.

As to them speaking without knowledge, it is forbidden for one to speak about Allāh's Religion without knowledge. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا
بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْىَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَأَن تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ
سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): " (But) the things that my Lord has forbidden are *Al-Fawaḥish* (great evil sins, every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allāh (ﷻ) for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allāh (ﷻ) of which you have no knowledge." (Qur'ān 7:33)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ
إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And follow not (O man i.e say not, or do not or witness not etc.) that of which you have no knowledge, (e.g. one's saying "I have seen," while in fact he has not seen, or "I have heard," while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allāh (ﷻ)). (Qur'ān 17:36)

I would like to mention here that many orators relate *aḥādīth* that have no basis; *aḥādīth* that are either weak or fabricated. All the while, they claim that they cannot attract the people except with those kinds of *aḥādīth*. This is a grave error. There is in the authentically related Sunnah and in Allāh's Book that which is more than sufficient and more than adequate, so that we do not need to rely on weak or fabricated narrations.

To which of these do we Give Precedence?

22) Some among the youth are confused – to which of the following should they give precedence: knowledge, da'wah, or Jihād in the way of Allāh? Which of these matters should one begin with?

As for seeking knowledge and performing *da'wah*, there is no conflict between the two: one can combine between the two by being a student of knowledge and a *dā'ī* (caller) to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) at the same time. In fact, every student of knowledge must be a *dā'ī* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), for one of the fruits of knowledge is conveying it to others. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Convey from me, even if it is a single verse."

If you know the Islāmic ruling in a single issue, invite to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) by teaching it to others.

As for giving precedence to *Jihād* over seeking knowledge, or to seeking knowledge over *Jihād*, this differs,

- First, according to the ruling for each in a given situation.
- Second, according to who it is we are talking about.

Let us discuss the first matter: If seeking knowledge is compulsory in a specific situation while performing *Jihād* is a voluntary duty, one must give precedence to seeking knowledge, because the compulsory act is given precedence to the voluntary one. But if, one the other hand, *Jihād* is compulsory in a specific situation and seeking knowledge is a voluntary duty, then for the very same reason, one must give precedence to *Jihād*.

What if both seeking knowledge and *Jihād* are compulsory duties or if both of them are voluntary duties?

This leads us to the second matter: in the case of some people, we say that it is better for them to give precedence to *Jihād*. And for others we say that it is better to give precedence to seeking knowledge.

Consider a man who is not a strong student of knowledge, having a weak understanding and poor memory. On the other hand, if he has a strong physique, if he is brave, and if he knows how to fight in war, we of course say to him, "*Jihād* is better for you."

And if one is in an opposite state – he has a weak physique and no understanding of how to fight in war, but when it comes to knowledge, he is intelligent, strong in his memory, understanding, and has the ability to derive

and infer – we say to him, "Seeking knowledge is better for you." A general principle is thus expressed: for each situation there are words and actions that are best suited to it.

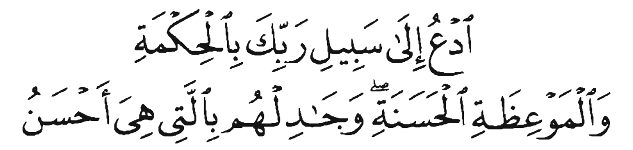
To summarize, we said that seeking knowledge and performing *da'wah* are not conflicting pursuits, for *da'wah* is the fruit of seeking knowledge, and combining between the two indicates completeness in one's knowledge.

And as for knowledge and *Jihād*, we said that there are two matters that need to be looked into. First, the ruling of each at the given time: if one of them is a compulsory duty while the other is a voluntary duty, the compulsory duty is of course given preference. And if both of them are compulsory duties or if both of them are voluntary duties, we look into the second matter: the person for whom we are issuing a ruling: people differ, and consequently, so does the ruling that applies to them.

Inviting to the Way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām) is *Wājib* (Compulsory)

23) What is the actual obligation upon the student of knowledge and the scholar in relation to inviting others to Islām? And what is the ruling regarding one who, though he has the ability and the qualifications of a dā'ī, forsakes performing da'wah?

Inviting others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is a compulsory duty. Allāh (ﷻ) says:



Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

Allāh (ﷻ) clarified that *da'wah* is performed in three stages:

1) *Da'wah* with wisdom

2) *Da'wah* with fair preaching.

3) And *da'wah* through argument.

The one you are calling might not have any knowledge, and he might not have any preconceived aversion to your message. In his case, you should call him with wisdom.

What does wisdom mean in this context? It simply means that you should clarify the truth if that is possible for you.

Fair preaching is used on one who hesitates to accept the truth and, at least to a certain extent, turns away from your message. If you see a degree of rejection and turning away from the person you are inviting, then call him with fair preaching, sometimes encouraging him with reminders of Allāh's reward, and sometimes warning him of Allāh's punishment.

Argumentation is resorted to when the person being called clearly rejects the truth and disputes it. You should call him in a way that is better, i.e., in a way that is best suited to convince him of the truth.

The above-mentioned verse comprises of two matters:

- Choosing that which is better -- speech and words that are clear, concise, and convincing.
- Choosing that which is better also means that one should resort to the clearest proofs, so that the truth becomes easily understood by the one being invited.

Consider the debate between Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) and the one who disputed with him about his Lord (Allāh (ﷻ)). What did Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) say? Regarding that debate, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِى حَآجَّ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ فِى رَبِّهِۦٓ
أَنْ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّىَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحْىِۦ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى
بِٱلشَّمْسِ مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى
كَفَرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrāhīm about his Lord (Allāh (ﷻ)), because Allāh (ﷻ) had given him the kingdom? When Ibrāhīm said (to him): "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He said: "I give life and cause death." Ibrāhīm said: "Verily! Allāh (ﷻ) causes the sun to rise from the east; then cause it you to rise from the west." So the disbeliever

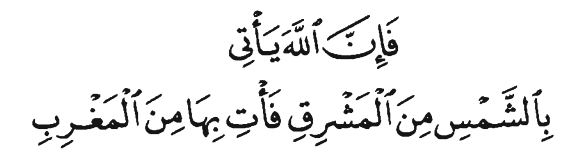
> was utterly defeated. And Allāh (ﷻ) guides not the people, who are wrong-doers. (Qur'ān 2:258)

How did this person give life and cause death? He brought a man who deserved to be killed, but he did not kill him. Because of this, he claimed to be giving him life. And he brought a man who did not deserve to be killed, but he killed him nonetheless. And because of this act, he claimed to have caused the man's death.

One might have argued with him, "Verily, if you bring a man who deserves to die, but then you do not kill him, you have not given him life, for he was alive prior to being brought to you; instead, by not killing him, you let his life continue in its course." And one might have said, "If you kill a man who does not deserve to die, you will not have caused his death; rather, you will merely have performed the action that led to his death."

In his sermon about the *Dajjāl*, the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that a young man will be brought to the *Dajjāl*, and the young man will testify to the fact that he is the very *Dajjāl* that the Prophet (ﷺ) informed Muslims about. The *Dajjāl* will kill him, cutting him into two pieces. Then, to prove that he actually did that he will walk between the two strips of the young man's body. Then the *Dajjāl* will call him, and he will stand, saying, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh,' and he will be laughing. He will say, "Indeed I bear witness that you are the *Dajjāl* that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) informed us about." Then the *Dajjāl* will go to kill him, but he will not be able to do so. This proves that the affair – i.e., of giving life and causing death – in its entirety is in the Hand of Allāh (ﷻ).

In regards to the story of Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) and the man who debated him, one could have debated with the man with the aforesaid arguments. However, Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) wanted to bring forth another proof, one that needed no further argumentation or debate. What did Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) say? He (عليه السلام) said:



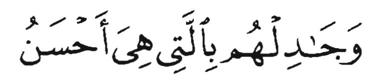
> "Verily! Allāh (ﷻ) causes the sun to rise from the east; then cause it you to rise from the west." (Qur'ān 2:258)

The man drew back, not being able to answer, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said:

فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ

So the disbeliever was utterly defeated. (Qur'ān 2:258)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:



And argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

This is meant to signify an approach that is better, a method that is better suited to convince, and a proof that is clearer, so that no confusion results. As long as we are able to do so, it is incumbent upon us to call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

As to the ruling for one who forsakes giving *da'wah*, though he is able to do so; *da'wah* is a societal obligation: if a sufficient number of people perform it, it is no longer obligatory upon the rest. So if you see a person who is misguided, with no one nearby to invite him, it becomes compulsory for you in particular to perform *da'wah* to him. About societal obligations, the scholars say, "If only one person is present, the duty rests on him."

Harnessing the Strengths of the *Dā'ī*

24) Can you give some guidance to students of knowledge, so that they can reach the level of being du'āt (callers) to Islām?

In reality, there is no good in performing *da'wah* if one does not also seek out knowledge; at the very least, one who does the former, and not the latter as well, loses out on much goodness. Similarly, it is incumbent upon the student of knowledge to not only seek out knowledge, but also to perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

- *When a student of knowledge sees a man doing wrong in the Masjid, what should prevent him from calling that man to the way of Allāh (ﷻ)?*
- *When the student of knowledge goes to the marketplace to conduct his affairs, and there finds someone perpetrating wrong, what should prevent him from inviting that man to the way of Allāh (ﷻ)?*
- *When the student of knowledge is at school and sees a fellow student doing wrong, what should prevent him from inviting that student to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), from walking with him and taking him by the hand in order to help solve his problem?*

When one sees another person sin – one can sin either by perpetrating a forbidden deed or by not performing a compulsory deed – and then stays away from him, becoming hopeless of that person's betterment and reform, there is definitely a problem. Allāh (ﷻ) clarified to us that we should be patient and that

we should bear hardships, keeping in mind that Allāh (ﷻ) rewards his slaves for doing so. Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

فَٱصۡبِرۡ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡعَزۡمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسۡتَعۡجِل لَّهُمۡ

> Therefore be patient (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) as did the Messengers of strong will and be in no haste about them (disbelievers). (Qur'ān 46:35)

There is no Conflict between Inviting others to Islām and between Gaining Fame while one only has a Small Amount of Knowledge

25) Some students of knowledge are derelict in the compulsory duty of calling others to Islām and of educating the people; some make the excuse that they lack knowledge while others argue that they want to stay away from fame, while yet others come up with different excuses from the ones just mentioned. What is your advice to such students?

As to the first excuse – a lack of knowledge – it is established that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Convey from me, even if it is a single verse."

So one should convey to the degree that one knows; by doing so, much reward and good will result.

As for the second excuse – fear of fame – one must do what is obligatory, in terms of worshipping, teaching, etc. One should put the matter of fame completely to the side. And at any rate, fame in knowledge is something to be desired, and it does not harm a person in the least. On one occasion, the Prophet (ﷺ) presented a question to the Companions, saying:

> "Verily, among trees there is a tree whose leaves do not fall, and it is the example of the Muslim. Tell me what it is."

Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), who was very young at the time, said:

> "People thought about the trees of the desert, and it occurred to me that it was the date-tree, but I was shy."

The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) said,

> "O Messenger of Allāh, tell us what it is."

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"It is the date-tree."

'Abdullāh (ﷺ) said:

> "Then I informed my father of what went on inside of me, and he (ﷺ) said, 'For you to have said it would have been more beloved to me than for me to have such and such.'"[58]

Observe how much 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) wished that his son had spoken, even though his son would have achieved a kind of fame had he spoken and given the correct answer.

What is important to understand here is that one is not harmed and one's rewards are not decreased if he becomes famous because of his knowledge or because of his efforts in making *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷺ). True, if one does good deeds to achieve fame, then that is an altogether different situation.

They Mainly Devote Themselves to Memorizing the Qur'ān and *Aḥādīth* that Pertain to Islāmic Jurisprudence

26) Although they devote themselves to memorizing the Qur'ān and aḥādīth that pertain to Islāmic Jurisprudence, some students of knowledge pay little or no attention to Uṣūl Al-Fiqh (a branch of knowledge that deals not with the detailed rulings of Islāmic Jurisprudence, but with issues pertaining to proofs themselves – the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, Ijmā', Qiyās, etc.), even though Uṣūl Al-Fiqh is the science that teaches one how to understand revealed texts. Esteemed Shaykh, please advise students about this matter?

In my view, a student of knowledge, especially the young beginner student, should begin by memorizing the Noble Qur'ān, for that is what the Companions (ﷺ) did. They would learn the Qur'ān, and for them learning meant both learning its teachings and applying them. The student of knowledge needs the Qur'ān: suppose you were to speak in a gathering and you want to mention a proof from the Qur'ān, which you did not memorize; it would be a failing on your part if you cannot recall that proof.

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[58] Al-Bukhārī related it in the chapter, "Shyness in Knowledge." Muslim (2811) related it as well in the chapter, "The Example of the Believer is that of the Date-Tree."

Therefore, I encourage students, especially young ones, to memorize Allāh's Speech and then to memorize *aḥādīth*, from a compilation such as *'Umdatul-Aḥkām* or *Bulūgh Al-Marām*, if one is able. Then, after that, comes the turn of *Fiqh* (Islāmic Jurisprudence) and *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*. Without a doubt, *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh* is one of the best Islāmic sciences, and there is a great deal of pleasure derived by the one who studies it: through the rules and principles of *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*, its student trains his mind to infer rulings from proofs.

If One Wants to Affiliate Himself to a Specific School of Islāmic Jurisprudence, he must not go Contrary to a Proof when it Becomes Clear to Him

27) Do you advise a student of knowledge not to ascribe himself to a school of jurisprudence (madh-hab)? And should he resort to a specific school when the ruling in an issue is not clear to him?

If by ascribing to a school of jurisprudence one turns away from all other views, even when the truth in a given issue is with another school, one is doing something that is forbidden: one is resorting to a base form of blind following.

But if one ascribes to a particular school in order to benefit from its rules and principles, all the while judging those principles by the Qur'ān and Sunnah and taking an opinion from another school when that is where the truth lies, then there is no harm in him doing so. Some distinguished scholars, such as Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and others like him affiliated themselves to a particular school, but they did not rule contrary to a proof when it became clear to them.

The Audio Cassette is One of the Means of Gaining Knowledge

28) Are audio cassettes considered to be one of the means through which knowledge is sought? And what is the best way for one to benefit from them?

There is no doubt concerning the fact that the audiotape is one of the means of gaining knowledge; we do not reject Allāh's blessing upon us in this regard, for we have benefited much from knowledge that is recorded on Islāmic audio cassettes. The audio cassette is a means of having the sayings of the scholars delivered to us, no matter where we (or they) are.

One might be thousands of miles away from a scholar, but one can still hear his words on a tape player. And this is from Allāh's blessings upon us. In reality, the audio cassette even represents a clear proof for or against us: knowledge has spread so far and wide by means of audio cassettes that one has no excuse for remaining ignorant, for instance, by saying that there is no scholar in close proximity to clarify the ruling in a matter.

As to the best way of benefiting from audio cassettes, this depends on each person's situation. Some are best able to concentrate on listening to an audio cassette while they are driving their car; others, while they are eating a meal or drinking coffee. What counts is that each individual knows how he can best benefit from Islāmic audio cassettes, so there is no clear-cut rule in the matter.

Regarding Unseen Matters, we must Accept and Confirm them Exactly as News of Them came to us

29) What does this mean: "The angels place their wings down for the student of knowledge, showing pleasure for what he does?"

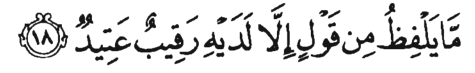
Regarding matters of the unseen, we must believe in them exactly as news of them came to us through revealed texts (i.e., the Qur'ān and Sunnah). Pay attention to the following rule, which is as beneficial as it is important: "In matters that pertain to the unseen, we must understand revealed texts according to their apparent meanings." This is because our minds cannot grasp the reality or the form of unseen matters. This brings us to the question, "Do angels have wings?"

Yes, they do have wings, for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

جَاعِلِ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُوْلِىٓ أَجْنِحَةٍ

Who made the angels messengers with wings. (Qur'ān 35:1)

Since they have wings, it is possible for the angels to lower them for the student of knowledge, and we do not have to see that happening in order for us to believe it, because it is from the knowledge of the unseen. Likewise, we believe that to our right and to our left there are angels who are writing down all we say: a belief that is founded on the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):



Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by Him ready (to record it). (Qur'ān 50:18)

Do you see those two angels? Of course the answer is no, [but we still must believe that they are there]. Therefore, we must believe the [revealed] text (a ḥadīth in this instance) that informs us that angels lower their wings for the student of knowledge. But what is the manner in which they do so? Allāh (ﷻ) knows best (So we must not conjecture and hypothesize about the matter).

Here is another example of an unseen matter, and again, as is the case for all unseen matters, we do not know its reality. Some students of knowledge say that the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that, when it sets, the sun goes to perform prostration around the Throne, and then it seeks permission [to come back and rise again]. If permission is given to it [it goes to rise from the east]; otherwise, it [will] return (to rise from the West, which will occur prior to the Hour).[59]

One might say, "We see it setting from us now, but it remains [in the horizon] with another people. For example, it is setting here in Riyadh, but it has not yet set in Al-Hijāz. Or, for example, it is setting in an Eastern area, but here, it still remains in the sky. How can this be?"

We respond: You must believe in what the Prophet (ﷺ) said. As for how that occurs, then that is from the matters of the unseen, which none has knowledge of but Allāh (to Him belongs Might and Majesty) or one from the creation to whom Allāh (ﷻ) endowed knowledge thereof. When the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke the words of this ḥadīth, Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه) – its narrator – did not ask, "In what manner does that occur?" Instead, he believed without saying a word.

In another issue, some students relate that Allāh (ﷻ) descends every night to the heaven of the world when the last third of the night remains.[60] However, we know that the period of "the last third of the night" is different all over the globe. So how can that be? We say, "Allāh knows best." We believe that Allāh (ﷻ) descends to the heaven of the world as long as the last third of the night remains, and at the time of *Fajr*, the time of Allāh (ﷻ) descending ends for those upon whom dawn has arrived. Beyond that knowledge, Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

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[59] Related by Al-Bukhārī (7424), in the chapter, "And his Throne was upon Water..." Muslim (159) related it, in the chapter, "The Timeframe within which *Īmān* is Accepted," from the ḥadīth of Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه).

[60] This is mentioned in a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (1145), in the chapter, "Supplication and Prayer at the End of the Night." He related it elsewhere as well (6321 and 7494). Muslim (578) also related it in the chapter, "Encouragement to Supplicate and Remember [Allāh] during the Last Part of the Night, and the Supplication Being Answered during that Period," from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

Is it Permissible to Learn the Religion Through Books Only?

30) Is it permissible to learn the Religion from books only, without learning directly from the scholars, especially considering that, since scholars are so few in number, it is difficult for some to go and learn from them? And what is your view regarding the saying, "Whoever's Shaykh is his book, then he will more often times be wrong than right"?

No doubt, knowledge should be sought from scholars, but from books as well, because a book written by a scholar is like a scholar who teaches: the scholar who authors a book speaks to one through its pages. So if it is not possible for one to seek out knowledge from scholars, one should seek it out from books.

Nevertheless, seeking out knowledge from scholars is better than seeking it out from books. The one who seeks out knowledge from books often becomes tired, for it requires a great deal of effort and toil to learn from books. At the same time, without the physical presence of a scholar, the student of a book might remain ignorant of some important legislative principles, [for as he is studying a book, he has no one to explain it to him]. Therefore, as much as is possible, one must have scholars that are there for him to help him understand.

Some have said, "Whoever's guide is his book, then his errors will be greater than his correct [judgements or opinions]." This is neither absolutely true nor absolutely false. As to one who takes knowledge from any book he gets his hands on, then without a doubt, he will make many mistakes.

But as for one who relies on the books of scholars who are known for their knowledge and trustworthiness, then this student will not make many mistakes; rather, he may be correct in most of what he says.

The Best Way to Gain Islāmic Knowledge

31) What is the best way to gain authentic Islāmic knowledge in light of the conditions of the present era?

To be sure, the best way is for one to start with Allāh's Book, followed by what one is able to study from the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). Then, one should study what the people of knowledge have written, in *Fiqh* as well as other sciences.

What I would like from students of knowledge is that they concentrate on principles and rules and not on memorizing detailed legislations. By concentrating on the principles and rules of Islāmic legislation, one will come across a specific issue and be able to arrive at its ruling based on the principles he knows. The scholars have said, "Whoever is deprived of *Al-Uṣūl* (principles of legislation) becomes deprived of arriving (i.e., of arriving at true knowledge)." You will find many students of knowledge who fill their minds with individual, specific issues. But if the conditions surrounding an issue were to change ever so slightly, they would not know the correct ruling, because they did not bother to learn the rules and universal principles [of Islāmic legislation], rules and principles that the student of knowledge cannot do without.

When I was still a student, I was told about a student of knowledge who memorized a great deal without understanding what it was that he was memorizing. He memorized a book called *Al-Furū'*, which was written based on the *Madh-hab* of *Imām* Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal. *Al-Furū'* is from the most comprehensive of books written in the *Ḥanbalī Madh-hab*, for in it, the author points out views held by the other 3 schools of jurisprudence and by others as well. It was authored by Muḥammad Ibn Muflih (may Allāh have mercy on him), one of the prominent students of Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah. He was among the most knowledgeable of students regarding the views of Shaykh Al-Islām in *Fiqh*; even Ibn Al-Qayyim would refer to him in *Fiqh* issues that Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah discussed.

At any rate, the student in question memorized the entire book, without knowing the meaning of anything in it. Students of knowledge would go to him, treating him as if he were a book. If an issue were unclear to them, they would say to him, "What did Ibn Muflih say in such and such chapter?" He would read out the chapter to them from memory, word for word, without understanding the meaning of the rulings he was regurgitating. It is important to understand here that one should concentrate on memorizing and understanding *Al-Uṣūl* – *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh* (The Foundations Of *Fiqh*, a branch of knowledge that deals not with specific issues, but with proofs themselves: the Qur'ān, Sunnah, *Ijmā'*, *Qiyās*, etc.) and principles of legislation. This is from the most important of matters that a student of knowledge should occupy himself with.

Only One who is Knowledgeable and is Able to Discern between what is Correct and what is Wrong should Read such Books

32) Noble Shaykh – may Allāh preserve you – what is your advice to those among the youth who read books that contain errors in 'aqīdah (beliefs) and methodology? And what is your advice to those who advise the youth to read such books without pointing out to them the errors found therein?

Only one who is knowledgeable and is able to discern right from wrong may read books that contain deviation in matters of *'aqīdah* (beliefs) and *manhaj* (methodology). As for the student of knowledge who is still in the early stages of his study and who cannot discern between right and wrong, it is not permissible for him to read such books, as it is feared that he will go astray.

In the case of a certain kind of person it is necessary to read such books; here I am referring to one who is a scholar and who reads such books to learn of the errors found in them and then to point them out. A scholar cannot learn of mistakes unless he reads them. But if one is not knowledgeable, then he should stay away from books that contain falsehood. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Whoever hears of the *Dajjāl* (i.e., that he has come out), then he should remain far away from him."[61]

The Prophet (ﷺ) went on to say that a man will go to the *Dajjāl*, thinking that he is a believer, calm in his heart that he has *Īmān*, but the *Dajjāl* will present such specious arguments as will make that man succumb and become one of his followers.

This ḥadith indicates that the doors that lead to evil should be blocked; it also informs us that one is never safe from *fitnah* (i.e., from trials and temptations).

It is the duty of students of knowledge – those whom Allāh (ﷻ) endowed with correct knowledge – to point out to people the mistakes of any book or of any man. But if one is able to speak directly with the one who made the mistake, in the hope that he will retract his view, then that, of course, is better. When

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[61] Related by Abū Dāwūd (4319). Aḥmad related it in his *Musnad* (4/431), from 'Umrān Ibn Ḥuṣayn (ﷺ).

one retracts a wrong opinion by choice, there are two great benefits that are achieved:

1) He will be saved from his error.
2) The people of knowledge will not appear divided, in that they will not rule one another to be misguided before the people. Whenever the scholars unite and come together in what they say, then that is, for sure, a great good.

4- The Means of Performing *Da' wah* to the Way of Allāh

1- The Means of Performing *Da' wah* to the Way of Allāh

Here I am referring to the means through which the *Dā' ī* conveys his message to others. These means are of three kinds, with each kind having an advantage that is specific to it:

1) Direct verbal communication: the *Dā' ī* meets those he is inviting, speaking to them face to face, clarifying to them his message, and pointing out the benefits of embracing that message and the good rewards achieved by doing so; rewards that are palpable now, in this world, and rewards that are promised for the Hereafter. The advantage of performing *Da' wah* in this manner is that the *Dā' ī* is able to assess the extent to which others are open to accepting his *Da' wah* – for example, by the expressions on their faces – so that he can deal with them in a manner that is suitable to their situation. He is able to discuss matters with them and, through the flow of the discussion, is best able to convince them of the truth, which makes this form of *Da' wah* more effective than the following forms.

2) Indirect verbal communication, as occurs through the medium of the radio. The advantage of using this means of performing *Da' wah* is that one is able to reach out to a wider audience than one would had if one went out to speak to people face to face.

3) Writing, by authoring books or articles in newspapers and magazines. The advantage of this form of *Da' wah* is that one gives

an opportunity to those he is inviting to take their time in reflecting upon his message; they can read his message over and over again at their leisure until they finally grasp its full force and meaning.

2- How to Perform *Da'wah* to the Way of Allāh

The First Matter: How to Express One's Message

One should vary the way he phrases his message, changing it to suit the situation of the person he is inviting; in this sense, there are three situations:

1) The one he is inviting desires what is good and is ready to accept the truth, but he is ignorant of what the truth is. In the case of this person, it is enough to simply invite him, for instance, by saying, "This is from that which Allāh and His Messenger prohibited, so stay away from it." Because he has a desire to follow the truth, he will be quick to accept it when it is presented to him.

2) The one being invited is either lazy in following what is good or desires to follow what is evil. For this kind of person, it is not enough to simply invite him; one must also preach to him in a good way, explaining the virtues and rewards of obeying Allāh (ﷻ) and the evil consequences and punishment of disobeying Allāh (ﷻ).

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓأَىٰٓ
أَن كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they belied the *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, Messengers, etc.) of Allāh (ﷻ) and made mockery of them. (Qur'ān 30:10)

3) The one being invited is opposed to the truth, not only being inclined toward evil but arguing in its favour as well. It is not enough to preach to and invite such a person; rather, one needs to debate with him in a way that is better – better in argument and better in clarification of the truth, so as to completely disprove his claims. Allāh (ﷻ) indicated these three situations in His saying:

ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ
وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ

> Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, "People are of three kinds: 1) those who acknowledge and follow the truth – these are the people of wisdom; 2) those who acknowledge the truth but do not apply it – these people need to be admonished into applying it; and 3) those who do not acknowledge the truth – these people need to be argued with in a way that is better. Because argument often leads to anger, it must be resorted to in a way that it is better, just as one resorts to the best [strategy and way] when one is defending himself from an attacker."[62]

If the one being invited acknowledges and accepts the truth after the *Dā'ī* argues with him in a way that is better, then all is well and good; otherwise, the *Dā'ī* finds himself in a fourth situation, which is indicated in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ

> And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islāmic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong. (Qur'ān 29:46)

Ibn Kathīr – may Allāh have mercy on him – said:

> "This verse (the end of it) is referring to those who turn away from the truth, choosing to remain blind in the face of clear proofs. Such people are stubborn and arrogant. In their cases, one moves from the stage of argumentation to that of combat, for such people are fought in a way that prevents and deters [their evil]."

The duties of applying this fourth situation might not rest on the shoulders of the individual who has no authority, for vigilante behaviour often leads to chaos, whereby much harm and corruption result.

So, in figuring out how to address those he wants to invite, the *Dā'ī* must consider their situation – are they or are they not willing to accept the truth?

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[62] Fatāwā (2/45).

The Second Matter: The Order One Follows in his Da'wah, in Terms of what He is Inviting Others to Follow

The *Dā'ī* must prioritize, beginning with what is most important and with the foundations of his message, which act as a prelude to what comes after. So he progresses along with the one he is inviting from one stage to the next.

For example, suppose we wanted to invite someone who denies the existence of the Creator. Since he rejects the existence of the Creator, he obviously refuses to worship Him and obey His Messenger (ﷺ). In this situation, then, we begin by establishing the existence of the Creator, mentioning logical proofs and tangible examples that point to His existence; we continue along these lines until he acknowledges the existence of the Creator and the fact that He is One and has no partner.

Then we move on to the issue of worshipping Allāh (ﷻ), explaining to him that it is compulsory to worship Allāh (ﷻ): since he acknowledged Allāh's Lordship, it follows that he must acknowledge the fact that none deserves to be worshipped but Allāh alone. Worshipping Allāh (ﷻ) alone is mentioned in the Qur'ān as a consequence of His Lordship (i.e., that He is the sole Lord of the entire universe – its sole Creator, Planner, Sustainer, etc.):

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ
وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ

O mankind! worship your Lord (Allāh (ﷻ)), Who created you and those who were before you. (Qur'ān 2:21)

Allāh (ﷻ) censured those who attribute partners to Allāh (ﷻ), partners who created nothing:

أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْـًٔا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿١٩١﴾

Do they attribute as partners to Allāh (ﷻ) those who created nothing but they themselves are created? (Qur'ān 7:191)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً لَّا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ
وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ مَوْتًا
وَلَا حَيَوٰةً وَلَا نُشُورًا ﴿٣﴾

> Yet they have taken besides Him other *aliha* (gods) that created nothing but are themselves created, and possess neither hurt nor benefit for themselves, and possess no power (of causing death) nor (of giving) life, nor of raising the dead. (Qur'ān 25:3)

Next, we should move on to establish the way we must follow when we worship Allāh (ﷻ), the way of the Messengers (ﷺ) whom Allāh (ﷻ) sent to the creation and aided by His Signs (miracles, verses, etc.). They taught mankind that which benefits them from matters that pertain to the unseen, and they taught mankind how to worship Allāh (ﷻ), because worship is Allāh's right, which he made compulsory upon His slaves. Hence it is compulsory to worship Allāh (ﷻ) in a way that pleases Him (ﷻ), and none can know that way except through the Messengers (ﷺ).

When the person being invited acknowledges that we must worship Allāh (ﷻ), but only upon the way of the Messengers (ﷺ), we move on to clarify that there is one particular Messenger whom we must follow, and he is the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdullāh Al-Qurashi Al-Hāshimi, who was sent to all of mankind. We can mention those verses that indicate this, pointing out that *Īmān* (faith) in the Messenger (ﷺ) entails *Īmān* in those Messengers (ﷺ) that preceded him, and not the other way around.

Then if he also accepts that, we move on to explain the details of the Prophet's *Sharī'ah*; we begin in order of importance: first, the prayer, then *Zakāt*, and so on.

The Arenas of Performing *Da'wah* to the Way of Allāh (ﷻ)

By 'the arenas of *Da'wah*,' we mean the different locations wherein one can perform *Da'wah*, since performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is not limited to the *Masjid* or to any other particular place; among those locations are the following:

1) Private locations, whereby the *Dā'ī* betakes himself to a specific person, to his home or otherwise, and then invites him to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), expressing his message in as clear a manner as possible and following a specific order based on what we discussed in the last section.

2) Important places, so the *Dā'ī* can call people in *Masjids*, places of gathering, such as gathering places during *Ḥajj*; or social clubs, coffee-shops, restaurants, and so on. One calls in that place which

is most suitable to the occasion and need. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) would present himself to the tribes during their festivals and business gatherings, calling them to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). *Imām* Aḥmad - may Allāh have mercy on him - related that Rabī'a Ibn 'Ibād Al-Daili (رضي الله عنه) said:

> "I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) in the marketplace of Al-Majāz, and he (ﷺ) was saying, 'O people, say: none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, and you will succeed.'"[63]

In another ḥadīth, Jābir (رضي الله عنه) said:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) would present himself to the people at *Al-Mawqif* (during the *Ḥajj* season), and he (ﷺ) would say, 'Is there a man who will carry me to his people, for the *Quraysh* has prevented me from conveying the Speech of my Lord *'Azza Wa-Jall* (to Him belongs Might and Majesty)."

About this narration, Ibn Kathīr said, "Each of the compilers of the four *Sunan* related it, and Al-Tirmidhī said, '*Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*.'"[64]

Ibn Isḥāq said, "This was the way of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ): every time people gathered during the [*Ḥajj*] season, he would go to the tribes, calling them to the way of Allāh and to Islām. He would present himself as well as the guidance and mercy he came with from Allāh (ﷻ). Whenever he (ﷺ) heard that a person of name and status among the Arabs was coming to *Makkah*, he (ﷺ) would accost him, inviting him to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) and presenting to him the message he was sent with."

3) Places of study: the *Dā'ī* can call others at institutes, schools, and universities, either by way of open lectures and symposiums or by way of lessons in a classroom setting. Through his words while he is delivering a lecture, the teacher who is sincere to his Religion is able to call others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Since a teacher is supposed to be a role model for others, he can invite his students to Islām by setting a positive example through his worship, his good dealings, and so on. The deeds and manners of a teacher leave a permanent imprint on the minds of his students, and the effects of that become manifest later on in their deeds and manners.

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[63] Related by Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (3/492), (4/341), and (5/371,376).

[64] Al-Tirmidhī said, "This ḥadīth is *Gharīb Ṣaḥīḥ*," and not as the Shaykh said: "*Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*."

One Reason that Leads to a Successful *Da'wah*

One reason that leads to a successful *Da'wah* has to do with those being invited: they are prepared to accept the *Da'wah*, and there are no barriers that might prevent them from accepting it. This most often occurs among people who come to realize the evil results of the falsehood they are upon, and so they look forward to coming across someone who will raise them to a better situation and a higher level of consciousness.

Consider the *Da'wah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) and how it was blessed with both a suitable audience and a suitable era, for a long period had passed since the previous Messenger (ﷺ), and so the people yearned for the light of revelation. Before the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent, Allāh (ﷻ) looked at the people of the earth and He *Maqatahum* (detested them), the Arabs among them and the foreigners among them, except for some remnants from the People of the Book.[65] So the coming of the Prophet (ﷺ) among the people was like desperately needed rain falling on dry land.

The clearest example in this regard is what happened between the *Aws* and the *Khazraj* (two tribes that inhabited *Madīnah*) during the war of *Bi'āth*, which took place approximately five years before the Prophet's migration to *Madīnah*. Many people, nobles included, were killed from both tribes during that war, and so they were in dire need of finding someone who could unite them. It is related in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* that 'Ā'ishah (ﵵ) said, "The Day of *Bi'āth* was a day that Allāh (ﷻ) granted to His Messenger (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) arrived [at *Madīnah*], and the people were divided; some of their chiefs and nobles had been killed and others were injured. So Allāh (ﷻ) granted that day to His Messenger (ﷺ), making it the cause of them entering [the fold of] Islām."[66]

Ibn Isḥāq mentioned that when the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke to a group from the *Khazraj* during the *Ḥajj* season, he presented Islām to them, and they accepted it. And they said, "We have left our people and another people between whom there is enmity and evil, and perhaps Allāh will unite them through you."

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[65] Based on the ḥadīth of 'Iyādh (﵁), which is related in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2865), in the chapter, "The Characteristics by which the People of Paradise are Known while they are in this World."

[66] Related by Al-Bukhārī (3777) in the chapter, "The Merits of the *Anṣār*." He related it elsewhere as well (3846) and (3930).

But when one's *Da' wah* is directed at a people who blindly follow their desires and who are enamored by the falsehood they are upon, then the success of *Da' wah* among them is slow moving in its progress. The current of falsehood flows strongly among them, like water flowing out of a bottle when its cork is released. A strong force and effort in *Da' wah* is needed to counteract the current of their falsehood, and that *Da' wah* should be carried out using various means at all levels of society. And we seek help from Allāh (ﷻ).

Means are Based on Aims

33) Are the means of performing Da' wah Tawqīfiyyah (i.e., limited to precedents from the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ))? By this, I mean, is it permissible to use modern means of performing Da' wah, such as the media? Or should we limit ourselves to those means of performing Da' wah that were used during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ)?

First, we must learn an important principle: means are based on aims; a principle that is established among the people of knowledge. The means of achieving a goal takes on the same ruling as the goal itself, unless the means used is itself *Ḥarām* (forbidden), for if it is *Ḥarām*, then there is no good in it.

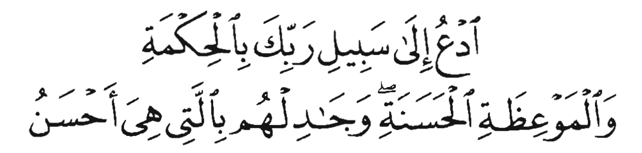
If a particular means is *Mubāhah* (permissible) and if it leads to a desired aim in the *Sharī' ah*, then there is no harm in it. But this does not mean that we should deviate from Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah, abandoning the admonitions found in those two primary sources. At times, one might resort to means that he sees as being legitimate whereas others do not see it as being legitimate. Therefore, one should avoid division among the people by adhering to those means that the people agree upon.

At the same time, we must know the difference between unity and *Da' wah*. After we call the youth involved in *Da' wah* to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, it might be for the general good to unite them upon lawful matters that do not hurt us in our Religion or in our *Da' wah*; we resort to such matters in order to avoid driving away the youth from Islām, which might occur when they see that the matter is all seriousness.

The Qur'ān and Sunnah First, and then Other Lawful Means

34) Differences have occurred among those who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) concerning issues that pertain to the means of performing Da'wah. Some hold that, because performing Da'wah is a form of worship, the means of performing Da'wah are Tawqīfiyyah (i.e., limited to those means that were used during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ)), and so they repudiate those who organize various Da'wah activities [that have no precedent in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ)]. Please clarify the correct ruling in this matter.

To be sure, performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is worship; Allāh (ﷻ) commanded us to perform it in His saying:



Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

As he is calling to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), the *Dā'ī* should feel that he is obeying Allāh's command and worshipping Him through his *Da'wah*.

Without a doubt, one can do no better than to call others with Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), for Allāh's Book is the best preacher for mankind:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَآءٌ لِّمَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'ān, ordering all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences, etc.) in your breasts - a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things, etc.) for the believers. (Qur'ān 10:57)

Furthermore, the Prophet's sayings are, by far, the best and most eloquent of sermons. At times, he would deliver a poignant sermon to his Companions,

which they described as having the effect of making their hearts tremble and causing their eyes to shed tears.[67]

If one is able to give *Da'wah* by means of verses of the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* of the Prophet (ﷺ), then no doubt, he is resorting to the best of means; and if he wants to add to that other means that Allāh (ﷻ) made permissible, then there is no harm in that, but there is one condition: the means resorted to do not involve anything that is *Ḥarām*, such as lying; playing the role of a disbeliever, for instance, in a play; playing the role of a Companion or of one of the *Imāms* after the time of the Companions; or doing anything similar through which it is feared that one of the eminent *Imams* of Islām is being debased.

Likewise, an actor in a stage play may not play the role of a woman, nor may a woman play the role of a man, for the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) cursed women who imitate men and men who imitate women.[68]

At any rate, if one sometimes resorts to a play, for instance, in order to unite the youth and if doing so does not involve anything that is *Ḥarām*, then I see nothing wrong in the matter. But I disapprove when one resorts to such means frequently, making them the main medium by which he performs *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh, all the while turning away from performing *Da'wah* through Allāh's Book and the Messenger's Sunnah, claiming that people are moved more by plays than they are by the Qur'ān and Sunnah; in fact, I hold that what he is doing in this case is *Ḥarām* (forbidden). To invite people to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) without calling them through the Qur'ān and Sunnah is something that is truly evil. But as I said, there is no harm in resorting at times to other lawful means, as long as there is no *Ḥarām* involved.

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[67] This is related in the ḥadith of 'Irbādh Ibn Sāriyah, who said, "One day the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) led us in prayer, after which he advanced towards us and delivered to us an eloquent and profound sermon, one that caused eyes to shed tears and hearts to quake. We said, 'O Messenger of Allāh! It is as if this is a farewell sermon!' He (ﷺ) said, 'Fear Allāh, and you must listen to and obey (those in authority)..." Abū Dāwūd related this ḥadith (4607); Al-Tirmidhī (2676) and Ibn Mājah (42) related it as well.

[68] 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men." Bukhārī related it (5880) in the chapter, "Men who Imitate Women and Women who Imitate Men." He related it elsewhere as well (5886) and (6834).

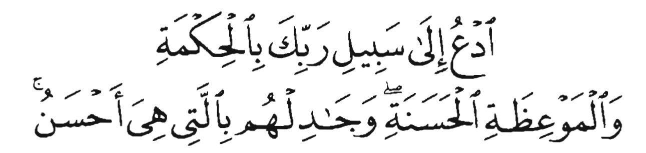
The *Dā῾ ī* should Use that Approach which is most Beneficial

35) There are those Du῾ āt who use the approach of educating the people, stressing the need to gain knowledge; others use an approach that involves giving sermons and reminding people of their duty to Allāh (ﷻ), thus calling them on a purely emotional level; which of these approaches is most effective?

In my view, it is from the blessings of Allāh (ﷻ) upon His slaves that He has made *Du῾ āt* differ in their approach in calling others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

Allāh (ﷻ) blesses a man with eloquent speech that has the effect of moving people's hearts, and so he dedicates himself to preaching. We say to him, "Preaching is better for you." On the other hand, Allāh (ﷻ) blesses another man with gentleness and kindness, so that he educates the people on a different level: he mixes with them and has an effect on them through his manners. We say to him, "This approach is better for you than the first approach," especially if he is not so proficient at speaking. Some people are effective *Du῾ āt*, but they are not natural speakers. The point is that Allāh's favours are distributed among His slaves, and He raises some above others by degrees.

Therefore, I feel that each person should use that approach which is most effective for him. One should not attempt to embark upon an endeavor that he is not suited for; at the same time, one should be confident when he is employing his talents, seeking help from Allāh (ﷻ) in his affairs.



Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.

Da῾ wah in Different Situations

36) There are many ways that callers to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) can follow when they perform Da῾ wah. What is the way that you have followed in your Da῾ wah? In your answer, you can perhaps include some advice for the youth in

how to make Da'wah, especially concerning the issue of how to invite each of the different categories of people – rulers, commoners, youth, practising Muslims, wicked-doers, etc.?

I give them the same advice that Allāh (ﷻ) gave His slaves as guidance:

ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ
وَٱلۡمَوۡعِظَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِۖ وَجَٰدِلۡهُم بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ

Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

The application of this advice differs from one person to another; we cannot give a general ruling that comprehends every person and every situation. In certain situations, it might actually be best not to speak to someone or invite them to the truth, because he may be in such a bad condition that it is highly unlikely that he will accept what you say or he might answer you in a way that will entail evil consequences for him. In some instances, if you were to forbid an evil practice, asking people to abstain from it, its perpetrators might end up perpetrating an even greater evil. At any rate, one must study any given situation, assessing the best way of going about his *da'wah* and the best manner in approaching the person he wants to invite.

Performing *Da'wah* through the Media; for Example, through the Medium of Television

37) These days, the media plays a very influential role in society. Do you feel, then, that we must use it – the television, for example – to spread the message to people who would not receive it otherwise? And what do you say to someone who says that it is not permissible to participate with the media companies of today? This is his argument: Because the media spreads much falsehood, one who participates with a media company is in effect approving of the falsehood it disseminates.

In my view, it is compulsory to use the media to perform *da'wah* to Islām, because when we use the media, the proof becomes established [upon those who would otherwise not come across Islām and its teachings].

I feel that we should use the media not just to stress one aspect of the Religion; rather, through the media, we should invite people to *tawḥīd*; to

believe in matters that pertain to Allāh's names and attributes, to worship Allāh (ﷻ) sincerely, so that they do not dedicate a specific form of worship to a ruler or to anyone else for that matter; to *fiqh*, in matters pertaining to worship and matters pertaining to dealings, such as marriage laws, and so on. So our *da'wah* through the media should be multi-faceted.

In performing *da'wah* through the media, we should not present topics in so much detail and depth that the reader or viewer becomes bored; rather, we should find a good balance between length and content, seeking to optimize the time people spend in reading an article or watching a program.

But if ever the situation becomes such that a greater good results when we do not participate with media companies – for example, the situation is thus that media companies will forsake evil when we boycott them – then of course it becomes compulsory to boycott them.

In the situation that boycotting media companies bears no fruit, in the sense that airtime becomes free for the airing of more and more evil programs, we must then take advantage of any free airtime that is available in order to spread the message of Islām.

The questioner mentioned that by participating with a media company, one implicitly approves of their evil content. This is not the case, for evil programs are not aired at the same time as good, beneficial programs are aired. One is distinct from the other. Whoever wants to view good can listen or watch, and when the time comes for a program that contains evil content, one is free to close the radio or television, and thus be free from its evil.

In my View, the Islāmic Audiotape is very Important

38) The Islāmic tape has become an important medium for performing Da'wah to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Noble Shaykh, what is your view regarding the Islāmic tape? And what advice can you offer to the owners of tape shops?

I feel that Islāmic audiotapes have a great deal to offer in terms of benefit. I would like to point out, however, that those who are involved in this field should not be concerned as much about quantity as they should about quality. There are those audiotapes that, though they contain admonishments that have the effect of softening one's heart, also contain weak or fabricated ḥadīth narrations, and so the evil that results thereby is greater than the good that results from having one's heart moved for the few minutes that one is listening. When one hears a

fabricated ḥadīth, a lie upon the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), it remains ingrained in one's mind, and then it becomes difficult to remove later on.

When common Muslims hear of a tape that incites crying and that moves their hearts, they will not hesitate to hear such a tape, perhaps over and over again, so that if it contains falsehood, that falsehood will ingrain itself in their minds. Therefore those involved in the production or selling of Islāmic tapes should realize that they are responsible before Allāh (ﷻ) for any evil – evil in beliefs or manners – that is spread through their tapes, which is why they need to be especially careful in this matter.

Is Teaching Considered to be One of the Forms of Performing *Da'wah* to the Way of Allāh?

39) Is teaching the sciences of the Sharī'ah, in schools and universities, considered to be one of the doors of performing Da'wah to the way of Allah? In your answer, please take into consideration the fact that a teacher receives a salary for his services.

Without a doubt, teaching Islām is *Mustaḥabb* (i.e., one receives reward for doing it), for a teacher helps students in their pursuit of knowledge, but as to whether teaching is a form of *Da'wah*, then that altogether depends on the situation of the teacher.

If the teacher takes advantage of his position among students by guiding them to what is good and if he sets a good example through his deeds, then he is in fact performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh.

However, if he comes prepared with a dry lecture, which he reads out or explains to them as if what he is teaching is purely theoretical, and not a way of living, then he is not performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

The former kind of teacher is a caller (*Dā'ī*) to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), even if he is receiving a salary from the Muslim treasury, for that has no impact on his situation. Furthermore, it must be remembered (by students, teachers, and anyone else for that matter) that many people invite to the teachings of Islām by their demeanor and character before they invite others through their speech. This is to say that many students have the signs of knowledge and worship in their demeanor, so that people follow them more than they follow the speech of someone else.

There is no Harm in Debating so Long as One's Purpose is to Bring Out the Truth

40) The method of resolving disagreement through debate is one that our pious predecessors practiced, but it is one that is almost non-existent today. Do you feel that there is some benefit to be derived from debating issues, so that debates [among scholars] should once again become common?

In my view, for two disputants in a given matter to enter a debate is something that is good, so long as each participant has a good intention, and so long as the end purpose is to make Allāh's Word supreme. If one's intention, however, is to make his view triumph over the view of his opponent, then he is better off not debating. A good intention – that of bringing out the truth – was more common among our pious predecessors than it is among those of our era. When some people differ with you in an issue, you will find that they try to support their view with weak and specious arguments, arguments that have no bearing on the issue you are debating. This is why you will find that some scholars avoid debates, especially in front of the masses; they are afraid that their opponent will cloud the issues for the people, giving falsehood the semblance of truth, spurred on by their impudence and supported by their eloquence in speech. The harm that results can often be enormous, not only for the debater himself, but for others among the people of the truth as well, and even for the truth itself. Therefore, some scholars have preferred to stay away from debates.

Nonetheless, I feel that a scholar can safely avoid the aforesaid danger of debating by authoring a book, mentioning therein his view and the proofs that support his view. Then he can mention the arguments of his opponent, explaining how they pale in comparison to the arguments and proofs that support his view. This way, to be sure, is one that is as safe as it is effective in bringing about the desired results of a debate.

In presenting a written argument, however, one should not disprove the claims of his opponent by mentioning and then refuting proofs that that opponent did not and would not use to support his argument. From the authors I read who debate issues in their writings – such as Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and his student, Ibn Al-Qayyim – I have not seen anyone resort to such base tactics; in fact, such authors mention the real arguments and proofs of their opponents. And this is true justice. One must always keep in mind that he is responsible before Allāh (ﷻ) and that he must not choose a view simply because it is in harmony with his desires; otherwise, his false intentions and statements will be held against his good deeds on the Day of Resurrection.

Buying and Selling Magazines

41) There are certain newspapers and magazines that have evil content in them; some reach the level of mocking the Religion, scholars, or people involved in Da'wah. Noble Shaykh, should we warn people against reading and buying such magazines? And what is the ruling regarding selling them?

If people cannot know of the harm contained in a particular newspaper or magazine unless it is mentioned to them, then I feel that one should draw people's attention to the evil found within that publication, but only after one first gives a general description, so people can be aware of the same evil that might be found in other publications as well. So for instance, one should say, "There are newspapers and magazines that print such and such; one example, among others, is such and such newspaper which is printing such and such material."...

I have hitherto delivered a sermon about the ruling of buying and selling magazines that contain lewd pictures and words or anything else that is similarly evil. I delivered that sermon years ago, and some brothers have printed it in a booklet called, "The Trial Of Magazines." Whosoever wishes can refer to it, for it contains many benefits, *Insha-Allāh*.

The *Dā'ī* should Invite Others whenever he has the Opportunity to Reach Out to a Large Audience

42) What is the duty of Du'āt vis-à-vis media companies (television stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.)?

In my judgement, if one is asked to perform *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) in an arena wherein the benefits of his efforts will be more comprehensive, then he should not desist from accepting the offer. Rather, he should eagerly respond in the affirmative, sensing that the opportunity offered to him is from the blessings of Allāh (ﷻ) upon him. If the media is not used for good, it will be used for evil. Therefore, I feel that one should step forward and accept an invitation whenever media companies and institutions offer one.

One may Visit Evildoers in their Homes if He Feels that there is Benefit in Doing so

43) Is it permissible for a Dā'ī to invite people when they are in the act of performing their wicked deeds? And is it permissible to visit evildoers in their homes, for the purpose of inviting them to the way of Allāh?

As Allāh (ﷻ) commanded, *Da'wah* must be performed with wisdom. If one feels that his *Da'wah* will be suitable and effective in a given place and time, then he should go ahead, even if this means that he visits evildoers in their homes. Historians relate to us that, during the *Ḥajj* season, the Prophet (ﷺ) would go to the homes [of disbelievers], inviting them to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).[69]

Likewise, if one feels that some good can result, he may visit them in their places of amusement. But if he feels that there is no benefit in inviting them as a group, he can invite them one at a time, concentrating on their leaders, because if the leaders in a group improve and become rectified, then their followers will follow suit. If one cannot invite the leaders of a group in their general place of gathering, then one can go to their homes or to some other appropriate place.

The important point to understand here is that, whenever one adheres to wisdom, which Allāh (ﷻ) ordered us to apply, he will be upon much good:

يُؤْتِي ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ
أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

He grants *Ḥikmah* to whom He pleases, and he, to whom *Ḥikmah* is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. (Qur'ān 2:269)

Sitting in a Place wherein Sin is being Perpetrated

44) If one's intention is to invite others to Allāh, is it permissible to sit in a place wherein singing and backbiting are taking place?

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[69] *Zād Al-Ma'ād* (1/43); *Ṣirāt al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishām (2/31).

There is no harm in this if one cannot invite them in another place. One may go there and invite them, and then if they submit and refrain from their evil deeds, all is fine and well; otherwise, one should get up and leave.

Are Perpetrators of Sins Disbelievers or Believers?

45) Is it permissible to extend greetings of peace to perpetrators of sins? And is it permissible to cut off ties from them?

Before I answer this question, I would like to pose another question: are perpetrators of sins disbelievers or believers?

The Answer: Perpetrators of sins are believers through their *Īmān*, evildoers (*Fāsiqūn*) through their major sins. If they are upon such a condition, then they have not exited the state of *Īmān*, in which case it is not permissible to cut off ties from them, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "It is not permissible for the believer to cut off ties from his brother for more than three nights, whereby they meet and both of them turn away [from one another]. And the best of the two is the one who initiates *Al-Salām* (greetings of peace)."

So if you pass by a man who is upon a sin that does not make him exit from Īslam, give him greetings of peace and invite him to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Advise him to desist from his sin and be gentle with him in speech, so that perhaps he may remember or fear Allāh.

Be careful, my brother! You might say, "I must forsake the perpetrator of sins," whereas I say, "You must forsake the sin of the one who perpetrates sins." As for the perpetrator of sins, it is only compulsory to forsake his company when doing so entails benefit, which is to say that forsaking him acts as his medicine: he becomes forced or convinced to desist from his sin.

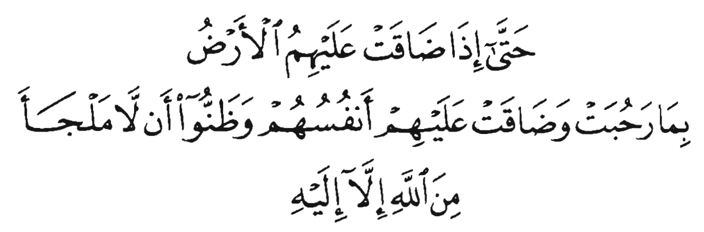
The summary of my response: It is not permissible to cut off ties from a believer, even if he is an evildoer, except when cutting off ties from him entails benefit, and benefit here means that he desists from his sin.

One might say, "Indeed, the Prophet (ﷺ) cut off ties with Ka'ab Ibn Mālik (ﷺ) and his two companions (ﷺ)."[70]

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[70] The story of how Ka'ab Ibn Mālik (ﷺ) and his two companions repented is related by Al-Bukhārī (4418), in the chapter, "The Ḥadīth of Ka'ab Ibn Mālik (ﷺ)." Muslim (2769) also related it, in the chapter, "The Ḥadīth of the Repentance of Ka'ab Ibn Mālik (ﷺ) and His Two Companions (ﷺ)."

The answer: The Prophet (ﷺ) cut off ties with them because there was a great benefit in doing so. Allāh (ﷻ) described their situation in His saying:



Till for them the earth, vast as it is, was straightened and their ownselves were straitened to them, and they perceived that there is no fleeing from Allāh (ﷻ), and no refuge but with Him. (Qur'ān 9:118)

Thus they benefited greatly by being cut off.

If a sinner does not benefit when others sever ties with him, but instead only increases in evil and in estrangement from the people of good, then it becomes forbidden to sever ties with him.

To Deliver a Sermon Beside a Grave is not a Legislated Act

46) These days, a new practice has become prevalent: While the deceased is being buried, a sermon is delivered. What is your view regarding this practice?

I hold that it is not legislated to deliver a sermon beside graves; at least, it should not be taken as a regular practice. However, under certain circumstances if there is a reason for it, it might become legislated. For example, while a burial is taking place, if one sees people laughing and joking among themselves, then to be sure, the occasion calls for a good sermon, because there is a reason that calls for one. But if one were to deliver a sermon while the people are burying their dead, without there being any due cause, then I see no basis for such a practice from the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ), so it should not be done.

It is authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he (ﷺ) and his Companions (ﷺ) were about to bury a man from the *Anṣār*, while the inside of the grave was not yet fully dug out and prepared. Then Prophet (ﷺ) sat down, and his companions sat down around him [attentively waiting for his words] as if there were birds perched on their heads (i.e. they were motionless; this is how attentive they were when they would listen to the Prophet's speech), showing their awe and reverence [for the Prophet (ﷺ)]. The Messenger (ﷺ) had a stick with which he (ﷺ) was scratching the ground. He (ﷺ) began to talk to them

about the situation of man (in general) as he is dying and after his death.[71] From this ḥadīth it is clear that he was not delivering a sermon to the people; instead, as he (ﷺ) and his companions (ﷺ) were waiting for the digging to be completed, the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke to them; it would be the same if you and your companions were waiting for the completion of a burial, and then you began to speak to them about the same issues. There is a difference, then, between a private discourse among companions and between words that are spoken in the form of a sermon.

Also, when the Prophet (ﷺ) would bury the dead, he would stand over the grave and say:

> "Ask forgiveness for your brother, and ask firmness for him,[72] for indeed, he is now being questioned."

This too is the mention of a specific issue, and not a sermon.

A *Daʿwah* that is without Knowledge can never become Upright

47) We know of some duʿāt who concentrate on calling others to the way of Allāh and on strengthening the ties of brotherhood among Muslims; they do not, however, concentrate on teaching or even on learning Islāmic beliefs and the other teachings of Islām. They basically show no interest in attending gatherings of knowledge. Please comment on this issue.

Before anything else, the *dāʿī* must supply himself with knowledge. When callers give little or no consideration to knowledge, it means that their *daʿwah* will lack direction and that the people they invite will remain ignorant.

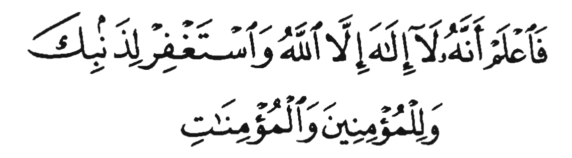
If the *daʿwah* in a particular area or among a specific group is based on ignorance, then each person will rule based not on the teachings of the *Sharīʿah*

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[71] Related by Abū Dāwūd (3212); Al-Nisā'i (2000); Ibn Mājah (1548); and Aḥmad, in *Al-Musnad* (4/287, 288, 297), from the ḥadīth of Al-Barā Ibn ʿĀzib (ﷺ).

[72] Meaning, ask that your brother be firm upon *Tawḥīd* when Munkar and Nakīr question him. The first matter about which one is asked when he dies is *Tawḥīd*; so he is asked, "Who is your Lord? What is your Religion?" And he is asked about the man who, "was sent among you (i.e., the Messenger (ﷺ))? We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make us firm upon *Tawḥīd*.

but on what his mind feels is correct. And this is a wrong way of going about matters, a way that we should most definitely avoid following. A person should only perform *da' wah* after he learns [the specific Islamic precept or ruling that he is inviting others to follow]. Al-Bukhārī – may Allāh have mercy on him – gave one of his chapters the following title: "Knowledge Before Speech And Action." He then proved the correctness of this title by mentioning this verse:



So know (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) that *Lā ilāha Illa Allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh (ﷻ)), and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women. (Qur'ān 47:19)

Therefore, one should first learn and then perform *Da' wah*.

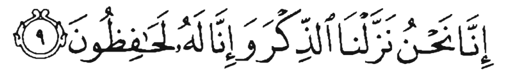
A *Da' wah* that is not based on knowledge can never become upright. Suppose that we were leaving Jeddah, intending to go to Riyadh. Now suppose we were to take hold of a man known for his goodness and good character, saying, "Be our guide in our trip to Riyadh," despite the fact that he does not know the way. We would end up lost in the desert, perhaps never reaching Riyadh, all because he did not know the way. So then how can one be a guide to the *Sharī' ah* when he does not know the *Sharī' ah*? This can never be so.

Denying Causes is Ignorance Regarding the Religion and Foolishness in One's Mind

48) How can we refute those who say, "Verily, Allāh (ﷻ) guaranteed to preserve this Religion, so the efforts of the Du' āt who are trying to serve Islām are pointless, there being no need for them"?

It is very easy to refute such people. They are a people who reject causes, which is in fact ignorance regarding the Religion and foolishness in their minds. Yes, Allāh (ﷻ) did guarantee to preserve this Religion, but through causes – the efforts of the *Du' āt*, who invite others to Islām and clarify its teachings to them. What the ignorant people you referred to say is similar in effect to the saying, "Do not marry, for if a child is decreed for you, then a child will come to you"; or like the saying, "Do not strive hard to seek out your sustenance. If it is decreed for you, then it will come to you all by itself."

We know that Allāh (ﷻ) says:



> Verily We: it is We Who have sent down the *Dhikr* (i.e. the Qur'ān) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption). (Qur'ān 15:9)

Allāh (ﷻ), knowing that matters occur through causes, decrees causes through which the Religion is preserved.

The Religion was preserved from innovations of belief and action, because the early generation scholars spoke out and wrote, clarifying the teachings of Islām to the people. Therefore, we too must do what Allāh (ﷻ) commanded us to do, in terms of defending and protecting the Religion and in terms of spreading its teachings to the masses. Through these efforts, the Religion will be preserved.

5- Plays, *Anāshīd*, Excursions, and Summer Camps

A few Words Regarding Summer Camps

All praise is for Allāh, Lord of all that exists. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations on our Prophet, Muḥammad, and on his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgement.

Without a doubt, the government (the Shaykh here is referring to the Saudi government) – may Allāh guide it to what is good – should be commended for establishing summer programs for the youth, programs that help prevent much evil. Imagine what would happen if the youth were left free to roam the malls or the streets. How much evil would result from that? I believe that any intelligent person who is in touch with reality knows that that would be very destructive for the youth, who would then become misguided, developing base manners and coarse thoughts.

But summer programs for the youth – and all praise is for Allāh – help preserve the religion of many youths; mind you, I am not saying most of the youth or all of the youth (because not all of the youth participate in such programs). In summer camps, for example, the people of knowledge are invited to deliver lectures through which the youth gain knowledge and through which a bond is established between the youth and scholars. And of course, there is much good in this.

During summer camps, it is from wisdom to allow the youth to play soccer, to act out plays that are lawful, and to engage in other lawful leisure activities. If people are forced to be serious in all situations and at all times, they will become bored and tired. The Companions – may Allāh have mercy on them – said:

> "O Messenger of Allāh, when we are with you, you mention Paradise and the Hellfire, so that it is as if we see them with our very eyes. But when we go to our families and children, we forget."

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"An hour and an hour."[73]

This means that it is normal for a person to be upon the former state at times and upon the latter state at other times.

On one occasion, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (ﷺ) said:

"I will stand at night (to pray) as long as I live, and I will fast during the day as long as I live."

When news of this reached the Prophet (ﷺ), he (ﷺ) said to 'Abdullāh (ﷺ),

"Did you say this [statement]?"

He said:

"Yes, O Messenger of Allāh."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, your Lord has a right over you, your soul has a right over you, your body has a right over you, and your guest has a right over you, so give to each owner of a right his due right."[74]

Some people were informed of the good deeds that the Prophet (ﷺ) performed in private, i.e., the deeds he performed in his home. They seemed almost to disparage the worth of those deeds, saying:

"The Messenger (ﷺ) was forgiven for his previous and his later sins, and we are not like him,"

so one of them said:

"I will not sleep during the night."

By this he meant that he would stand to pray in the night, without sleeping. The second one said,

"I will fast without breaking it (i.e., fast every single day)."

The third one said:

"I will not eat meat."

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[73] Related by Muslim (2750), in the chapter, "The Virtue of Consistently Thinking about and Remembering the Affairs of the Hereafter..." from Handhalah Al-Usaydi (ﷺ).

[74] Related by Al-Bukhārī (1974, 1975) in the chapter, "The Right of a Guest in Fasting," and the chapter, "The Right of One's Body in Fasting." Muslim also related it (1159), in the chapter, "The Prohibition of Fasting One's Entire Life, if One is Harmed by Doing so or if a Right is Lost in the Process..." from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (ﷺ).

And the fourth one said:

> "I will not marry women."

When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard that, he (ﷺ) said:

> "What is the matter with people who say such and such. As for me, I fast, and I break my fast. I pray, and I sleep. And I marry women, so whosoever turns away from my Sunnah, then he is not from me."

For one to take his share of lawful pleasure is, no doubt, sound wisdom. Furthermore, playing soccer not only provides pleasure that might help alleviate one's mental stress, but it is also beneficial to one's body, making it stronger and more active. But at the same time there are certain matters one must take into consideration:

1) Players must stay away from what some of the foolish ones do in terms of wearing shorts that are not long; a way of dressing that is forbidden. If we say that one's leg is *'Awrah* (an area of the body that must be covered), then by its very definition, one cannot lay bare his *'Awrah*, nor can one look at another person's *'Awrah*. Even if we do not say that one's leg is *Awrah*, then for the youth to reveal their legs is a cause of *fitnah* (trial and temptation) among themselves. This is an evil that we must ward off.

2) Playing soccer should not lead some to using foul language of any kind; something is not permissible if it leads to coarse language, the use of which negatively affects one's honour and dignity.

3) When playing, the players should not do anything that takes away from their honour and sense of dignity. For example, when one team beats another, some of its players will begin to dance, climb one another's shoulders, or do something else that takes away from their honour and dignity. Sure, such acts have come to us from countries that have neither dignity nor Religion, but we must be the first to reject those acts. When we see children doing such acts, we must guide them, telling them to refrain and teaching them correct Islāmic manners.

One who disagrees with the concept of summer camps and the lawful entertainment that takes place during them might say that it is compulsory for religious lectures to take place in Mosques. But this is not true, for lectures can take place in Mosques, in schools, in institutes, in houses, or in other places as well.

One must have foresight, seeing matters as they truly are, and not as they are seen on a surface level only. One should have a deep understanding of matters,

taking into consideration all benefits and harms that might result from actions, for there is an important and comprehensive rule in the *Sharī'ah*: [we must] bring about benefits as much as we are able to and [we must] ward off harm, minimizing it as much as we are able to. This principle is comprehensive for all aspects of the *Sharī'ah*. Were we to say that summer camps are henceforward to take place in Mosques only, the people would not be able to tolerate that.

I say to one who disagrees; "Know that the Religion is more spacious in its legislations than you think. It brings forth benefits, no matter where they come from, as long as they do not bring with them an equal or greater harm, in which case they become forbidden."

If one were to say that the means of *da'wah* are confined to those means that were used during the Prophet's time, we must make him understand that the word *means* indicates the opposite of restriction or limitation, i.e., as long as something is a means and is not *Ḥarām* (forbidden), we follow it. This is because the means take on the ruling of the goals that are sought through them. Do we not convey the message of Islām to people by means of a microphone? Did this means exist during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ)?

When we read Islāmic books, do not some of us wear glasses to make letters clearer or larger? Glasses, then, are a means of reading books and gaining knowledge, and we use them even though they did not exist during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ)? And do not some of us use a hearing aid device to hear good words? Yes, but did such devices exist during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ)? Of course the answer is no. Therefore, as long as we acknowledge something to be a means, and not an end, it is lawful in Islām as long as it is not forbidden in and of itself. Suppose someone said, "This group of people will not be inclined to accept your message until you play music that they can dance to." We answer, "We will not play music, because, though music is a means in this situation, it is itself forbidden."

Overall, I am a proponent of summer camps for the youth; the organization of such camps is a praiseworthy effort on the part of the government, and so I encourage parents to enroll their children in them. However, I would like to warn them about an issue, and that is that, in summer camps, young children should not mix freely with teenagers or those older than them, for it is feared that some trial will result for some of them. Furthermore, those that are responsible for such camps should be known for their knowledge, trustworthiness, righteousness, and honour.

They should possess these qualities in the highest degree possible; to be sure, complete perfection is for Allāh (ﷻ) alone, but we should give duties of responsibility to the best available people. When the scholars spoke about the requisite qualities of a judge, they said that he should be just. But then they also

said, "If no just judge can be found, then we appoint the best of the evildoers, the one from them who is closest to trustworthiness, for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ

> So keep your duty to Allāh (ﷻ) and fear Him as much as you can. (Qur'ān 64:16)"

So the responsibility falls upon the guardian – father, brother, etc. – to ensure that he is sending his young trust to an appropriate camp. He should go himself to the camp facilities to see who is running it and how it is being run. And we ask Allāh to grant success to all.

Coming back to the original point, I repeat the need for students of knowledge to be deep in their thinking, to not judge matters by their outer appearances. They should always keep their eyes focused on the purposes of the *Sharī'ah* and on the good the *Sharī'ah* intends for the creation. They should not forbid a beneficial thing or one that prevents a greater evil, unless the *Sharī'ah* itself forbids that thing. When the *Sharī'ah* mentions something to be forbidden, we automatically know that there is no benefit in it or at least that its harm is greater than its benefit.

Advice for those who Run Summer Camps for the Youth

49) What advice can you give to those who run summer camps for the youth?

I spoke about this matter before, but I will say this – I feel that the organization of such camps is from the blessings of Allāh (ﷻ) upon us, and all praise is for Allāh, Who has made such camps possible. From what I have been told, those who run such camps are trustworthy and the youth who go to such camps do so in order to better themselves, using their time not in frivolity or play, but in beneficial matters. No doubt then, there is much good in such camps. I further encourage the youth to join study circles in which the Qur'ān is memorized, for the young find it easy to memorize, and the student can benefit a great deal by joining such circles of study.

We Encourage People to Send their Children to Summer Camps

50) In these countries – and all praise is for Allāh – there are many summer camps for children and Qur'ān institutes for women. Concerning summer camps for the youth, what advice do you give to people? And have you seen any positive results from camps that were organized in previous years?

First, concerning institutes wherein women are taught the Qur'ān, I strongly encourage women to join and attend them, to learn Allāh's Book and to gain reward for reciting it. As for summer camps, no doubt they provide many benefits, and it would even have been enough if all those camps managed to achieve was to keep children away from the streets and malls and away from wasting their time. Summer camps are especially beneficial when those who are running them are known for righteousness and adeptness in reaching out to the youth and guiding them.

I further encourage students of knowledge to get in touch with those people who are in charge of summer camps and offer their services to deliver lectures, and even to conduct classes if possible. We commend the government for opening the door to these camps, and we encourage them to continue in their efforts. Next, I advise my fellow citizens to send their children to participate in any good program, summer camps being one of them, study circles for learning the Qur'ān being another. Such programs help parents to raise their children properly and to protect them from matters that lead to evil or corruption.

The Ruling for Stage Plays

51) What is the ruling for stage plays that are intended for either Da'wah or entertainment?

If plays do not involve anything that is *Ḥarām*, then I see no harm in them. When I say that they should not involve anything *Ḥarām*, I mean, for instance, that no one should play the role of the Messenger (ﷺ), the Companions (ﷺ), or any of the major *imāms* of islām; furthermore, there should be no lying in them. But if the play sets out to depict an example of some action or situation, then there is no harm in that, and one should not consider the play to be *Ḥarām* or a lie. The person responsible for the play is not speaking about something as if it is a reality; rather, he is illustrating an instance of a pattern [of behaviour] that

is, for instance, not suitable, in order to warn others against it. Everyone knows that the actor is not really doing the deed that he is acting out, so we cannot say that the play is a lie (i.e., when one party purposefully says something that is not true, while the other party thinks that he is saying the truth, then the former party has spoken a lie. But in the case of a play, all parties involved – the actors and the audience – know that the play is depicting not reality, but an example of a real situation; hence it is not a lie).

Acting the Parts of Companions (ﷺ) or the *Tābi' īūn* (The Generation after the Companions)

52) What is the ruling in regards to acting out the roles of Companions (ﷺ) and the Tābi' īūn, for this sometimes occurs in plays that are staged during summer camps for the youth?

In my view, it is forbidden to act out the roles of the Companions and of the *Imāms* (eminent Islāmic scholars), regardless of whether they are *Imāms* from the *Tābi' īūn* or from later generations. To depict them in a play leads to their being debased, especially when the actor is not a practising Muslim; for example, he is someone who shaves, but wears a fake beard for the play.

We should avoid acting altogether, but if a play does not involve that which is *Ḥarām*, and if it illustrates a [societal] problem as well as its solution, then I hope that there is nothing wrong in that. But if a play involves something that is *Ḥarām*, such as a lie, it becomes forbidden, for the following is related in a ḥadīth:

> "Woe (or destruction) upon he who relates a lie, so as to make the people laugh. Woe (or destruction) upon him, and then woe (or destruction) upon him."[75]

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[75] Related by Abū Dāwūd (4990); Al-Tirmidhī (2315), and Aḥmad, in *Al-Musnad* (5/3,5). Al-Tirmidhī said, "This ḥadīth is *ḥasan*."

Melodizing Islāmic *Anāshīd*

53) We have found that some Islāmic tapes contain Anāshīd (words with good meanings written in verse form), which contain melodies that are similar to songs, and we know that songs are forbidden. What is the ruling concerning such Anāshīd?

In my view, it is forbidden to recite *anāshīd* that, though they are lawful in and of themselves, are performed in a melodious manner, whereby they are performed like songs. The practice of doing so resembles the practice of a people whom it is not permissible to resemble (i.e., the disbelievers and their songs). Furthermore, if a man who has a beautiful and luring voice performs *anāshīd* with a melodious tone, then some trial or temptation is feared, and consequently his recitation of the *anāshīd* becomes forbidden.

Islāmic *Anāshīd* that are Accompanied by the *Duff* (A Small Drum-Like Instrument)

54) Some Islāmic Anāshīd are accompanied by the Duff. What is your view regarding such Anāshīd? In answering this question, please keep in mind that they usually contain good meanings that inspire enthusiasm to perform good deeds.

There is much talk nowadays about islāmic *anāshīd*. It has been a long time since I myself listened to them. When islāmic *anāshīd* first appeared, there was nothing wrong in them: they were not accompanied by the *duff*; there was nothing in them that led to *fitnah* (trial and temptation); and they were not recited melodiously in the form of songs, which, as we know, are forbidden. But they have changed over the years, so that now one can hear a beating sound, which might be a *duff* and which might be something else.

Another change has occurred: the voices used to perform the *anāshīd* are beautiful and alluring. And a final change that has occurred is that they are performed after the manner of songs, which are forbidden. Because of these reasons, there is some disquiet in my soul over the issue. One cannot issue a ruling, saying that *anāshid* are categorically permissible; nor can one issue a ruling, saying that they are categorically forbidden. But if *anāshīd* are devoid of the above-mentioned matters, then they are permissible. But if a *nashīd* (singular

of *anāshīd*) is accompanied by the *duff*, if a beautiful and alluring voice is chosen to perform it, or if it is performed in the manner of vile songs, then it is not permissible to listen to it.

6- Evil Deeds and the *Dāʿī's* Role in Preventing them

Whosoever from You Sees an Evil...

55) The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

"Whosoever from you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand; if he is not able to, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to, then with his heart, and this [last one] is the weakest [level of] *Īmān* (faith)."[76]

What is the definition or what are the limits of the Prophet's saying, "If he is not able to?" I ask this because many people apply only the last part of the ḥadīth (i.e., hating an evil with their heart).

Here is the meaning of "able to": If one is able to remove an evil with his hand, then he must remove it with his hand. For example, if you see someone with a musical instrument, and if you are able to take it and break it, then you must do so. But if only those in authority are allowed to take such a step, then you must move on to the second level: changing the evil with your tongue. You can do this by inviting the man to break the forbidden instrument himself. Or you can refer the matter to one who has authority, one who is able, because of his authority, to break the instrument. If you are not able to do even this, then the least level of changing evil is to change it with your heart. This means that you hate and despise the evil action and that you do not sit with one while he is perpetrating it.

But here we come to an issue that many people are ignorant about: some people sit with a sinner [while he is sinning], and they say, "His sin is upon him." This is not true; rather, it is incumbent upon us to use the three said means: [removing evil] with our hands, our tongues, or with our hearts.

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[76] Related by Muslim (49) in the chapter, "The Proclamation that Forbidding Evil is from One's *Imān* (Faith)..." from the ḥadīth of Abū Sa'id Al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه).

It is obvious that if one hates a deed with his heart, it is not possible for him to bear sitting with someone who is in the act of perpetrating that deed. So if you find yourself in such a situation, you should stand up and leave him, submitting to the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

وَقَدۡ نَزَّلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فِي
ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ أَنۡ إِذَا سَمِعۡتُمۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكۡفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسۡتَهۡزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا
تَقۡعُدُواْ مَعَهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُواْ فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيۡرِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّكُمۡ إِذٗا مِّثۡلُهُمۡۗ

> And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ān) that when you hear the Verses of Allāh (ﷻ) being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. (Qur'ān 4:140)

If one is sitting with a man who is in the process of perpetrating a sin, he is participating with him in that sin, even though he might not be perpetrating it himself. The only exception to this general principle is when one is coerced to sit with the sinner, in which case he is excused.

The Muslim's Stance Vis-à-vis Sins that Are Widespread in the Lands of the Muslims

56) What should the stance of a Muslim be vis-à-vis many sins that have become widespread in Muslim lands, sins such as usury, the indecent attire of some women, the abandonment of prayer, and so on?

The Prophet (ﷺ) clarified the stance of a Muslim vis-à-vis sins when he (ﷺ) said:

> "Whosoever from you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand; if he is not able to, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to, then with his heart, and this [last one] is the weakest [level of] *iman* (faith)."

So based on this ḥadīth, changing or removing evil occurs on three levels:

1) Changing evil with your hand: If you have authority and ability, whereby it is possible for you to change an evil with your hand, do so. For example, an evil is perpetrated in your home, and you are the head of the household: in this situation, you are able to change the evil with your hand.

Suppose a man enters his house – the house is his, the children and wife that live in it are his – and finds a musical instrument; he can change the evil with his hand, for instance, by breaking the instrument, because he is able to do so.

2) Changing evil with your tongue: If you are not able to remove an evil with your hand, you then move on to the second level, which is removing it with your tongue. This can be done in two ways:

- You can say to the perpetrator of the sin, "Desist from this evil." So you can speak to him and, if the situation calls for it, you can reproach him.

- If you cannot even speak to him, you can convey his wrongdoing to those in authority.

3) Changing evil with your heart: When you cannot change evil, neither with your hand nor with your tongue, then you must reject it with your heart, and this is the weakest [level of] *Īmān*. This level requires from you that you hate the evil that is being perpetrated; you hate the fact that it exists and you wish that it did not.

Here is an important point to consider: the Prophet (ﷺ) pointed it out in the ḥadīth when he (ﷺ) said:

"Whosoever from you sees…"

Does seeing here refer to actual sight? Does it refer to sure knowledge? Or does it refer to something that one is not absolutely sure about, but is more than 50% sure?

As for the last question, the answer is no, because it is not permissible to have evil thoughts about a Muslim. What remains, then, is actual sight and sure knowledge; the former refers to one who actually sees another person perpetrating a sin, and the latter occurs when one hears the sin being perpetrating; if he cannot see, or when someone he trusts informs him.

What becomes clear to us from this ḥadīth is that the Messenger (ﷺ) did not want us to hasten to arrive at a judgement against a person until we see him doing an evil action:

> "Whosoever from you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand; if he is not able to, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to, then with his heart...."

Some people have asked me, "I sit with people as they are committing a sin, but I hate that sin and reject it with my heart. In this situation, am I myself sinning or not?" One person said, "I make Allāh bear witness that I hate this evil and that I despise it in my heart."

Our response to him is, "You have not rejected it with your heart, for had your heart rejected it, your limbs would have rejected it as well (i.e., you would have physically removed yourself from the evil). The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Truly! In the body there is a *mudghah* (a piece or part); if it is well, then the entire body becomes well, but if it is corrupted, then the entire body becomes corrupted – Truly! It is the heart."[77]

Suppose that your heart despises a deed; is it possible for you to bear sitting with those who are in the act of doing it? Of course not, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ

> And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ān) that when you hear the Verses of Allāh (ﷻ) being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. (Qur'ān 4:140)

Some people among the masses think that by hating an evil act that is being perpetrated in their presence, they are executing the Prophet's command in his saying:

"If he is not able, then with his heart."

Of course, they are gravely mistaken. Rather, as I have explained, one who rejects and hates a matter cannot – not realistically and not according to the principles of the *Sharī'ah* – remain in a place wherein it is being perpetrated. One lies when one says, "I hate this evil," when all the while he is sitting with people who are in the act of perpetrating it.

Some people have said to me, "If you say that, then it consequently becomes forbidden to sit with those who shave their beards, because shaving [one's beard] is an evil deed." We answer: there are two distinct matters involved here:

1) Actually doing an evil deed.

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[77] A portion of a ḥadith that is related by Al-Bukhāri (52), in the chapter, "The Superiority of One who is Careful Regarding His Religion." Muslim (1599) also related it, in the chapter, "Taking what is Halāl and Forsaking Doubtful Matters," from the ḥadith of Al-Nu'mān Ibn Bashir (ﷺ).

2) The effects of doing an evil deed.

When you see a man doing evil, you should prevent him (according to the said three levels), and if he still does not desist, then you must not sit with him, because changing an evil with one's heart involves you not sitting with him.

But what if you come across a people who have perpetrated a sin, and though they are finished doing it, its effects remain visible on them? Is it permissible for you to sit with them? Yes, you may sit with them, because what you witness is not the evil itself but its effects or its signs. Therefore, you must make the distinction between those who are in the act of performing evil and between those upon whom you can see traces of evil deeds.

Do not sit with those who shave their beards while they are actually shaving, but you may sit with them after they have shaved. At the same time, however, do not lose the opportunity – if possible – to advise them; after all, you do see the traces of their evil deed. We advise them because doing so comes under "ordering to what is good and forbidding what is evil." Similarly, you may sit with a person from whose mouth you smell cigarette smoke. There is no harm in sitting with him, but you should advise him to quit. But if he is in the act of smoking a cigarette, do not sit with him; otherwise, you will be his partner in his sin.

There is no Contradiction between the Two *Aḥādīth*

57) Is there a conflict in meaning between the following two aḥādīth: first, the Prophet's saying to ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ):

> "Verily, Allāh is *Rafīq* (Gentle, Kind, Merciful), and He loves gentleness. He gives for gentleness that which He does not give for harshness and that which He does not give for other than it."

And second, the Prophet's saying in another ḥadīth:

> "Whosoever from you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand; if he is not able to, then with his tongue....?"

There is no conflict in meaning between the two *aḥādīth*, because the Prophet's saying:

> "then let him change it with his hand,"

is meant for that situation wherein it is not possible to remove an evil through gentler means. If one can change an evil through the hands of the doer himself, then that is of course better.

For example, a *dā'ī* sees a man who has with him a musical instrument, which he is in the act of playing. The *dā'ī* says to him, "Indeed, this is *Ḥarām*, and so you must break it." Here, if the man breaks it himself, good is achieved, because though he might break it from fear, he might actually do so, being convinced that he is doing the right thing. At any rate, for him to directly undertake the task of breaking it is better than for the *dā'ī* to approach him and break it. If the *dā'ī* cannot convince him to break it, he should break it himself if he is able to do so; if not, then he should change the evil with his tongue; and if he cannot do that, then with his heart.

Based on the above-mentioned principle – opting for gentler means whenever doing so is possible – when someone speaks or writes falsehood, students of knowledge must contact him before openly refuting him, so that perhaps he may retract his words by himself. If he realizes that he erred, then he must clarify his own mistake to the people, before another person comes and refutes him orally or in writing. Proclaimed refutations among scholars weaken their position before the people. When people see students of knowledge writing against one another or refuting one another, they will become confused, not seeing a united front from the scholars. The people will not know whether the truth is with this person or that person.

Were one to go to the person he thinks made a mistake in order to come to a mutual understanding, much good would result. One should say, "This is a mistake," after which the two of them should discuss the issue. It is my thinking that a man who wants to establish the *Sharī'ah* will return to the truth, or at least, he will say, "By Allāh, this is what I know. If you hold another view, then there is no harm in you proclaiming it; rather, you must proclaim it if you deem it, and not what I say, to be the truth."

Furthermore, I feel that the correct way in such matters is to not mention another person in the context of exposing his mistake in front of the people. Instead, one should clarify the truth alone, for instance, by saying, "Were one to say such and such (mentioning another person's view without mentioning his name), the answer to his claim would be such and such." This way the truth reaches the people without the arousing of enmity among people who hold opposing views. The exception here is the case of the innovator; it is compulsory to clarify his mistake and his identity, so that he does not deceive people. But as for issues of *ijtihād*, in which the *Sharī'ah* has made matters spacious, it is best to tread the path of wisdom and of uniting hearts as much as possible.

This might be from the Use of Wisdom

58) What is your view in regards to a Dā'ī who sees an evil, but remains silent, with the aim of changing it later on?

At times, one delays openly challenging the presence of an evil action not because of one's apathy but instead because one is using wisdom in inviting others to the way of Allāh. For example, it might not be suitable to invite the perpetrator of a sin at the present time, so we delay, waiting for the right moment. This is the right course to follow, for as we know, the teachings of Islām were legislated in gradual steps. Hence, Islām approved – at least implicitly – of certain actions which in the end became forbidden. In the case of alcohol, for instance, Allāh (ﷻ) clarified for His slaves that in it is great sin but also benefits for mankind and that the sin in it is greater than its benefits. People continued to drink alcohol until yet another verse was revealed, in which it is clearly stated that alcohol is categorically forbidden.

Therefore, if one sees that the greater benefit is in not inviting someone now, but rather later when the time or place is more suitable, then there is no harm in that. But if one fears that he will not get another chance to invite that person or that he will forget, there is no longer any advantage in waiting, and so one must hasten to clarify the truth and call to the way of Allāh.

Up until now, we have been referring to a situation wherein the *dā'ī* is inviting a specific individual. But if the *dā'ī* is in a large gathering and wants to address those present and call their attention to a specific matter, he should not wait and thus lose his opportunity, because by waiting, he might not be able to bring together that large audience at a later time.

First and Foremost, the *Dā'ī* must Present Islām

59) The youth are in a state of confusion, not knowing how to deal with the many evils that are widespread in Muslim countries. Should they be stern and harsh in attempting to eradicate evil? Or should they resort to another method, which might not be as effective, especially in some countries wherein Allāh's Sharī'ah is not applied in the correct manner? Noble Shaykh, please guide the youth to the way you deem best.

In my view, they should begin by presenting true Islām – its beliefs, its deeds, and its manners – without resorting to harshness, which only results in driving

people away. I believe this wholeheartedly: if Islām is presented in the correct manner, people, by their inherent natures, will accept it. This is because Islām is in perfect harmony with the inherent and sound nature of man.

On the other hand, when a *dā'i* attacks people for the beliefs they inherited from their parents and grandparents, he will have alienated his audience, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ

And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allāh (ﷻ), lest they insult Allāh (ﷻ) wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings. (Qur'ān 6:108)

In a society that is like the one we live in, *Du'āt* (callers) should strive to clarify the truth, clearly describing it as it is, and clarify falsehood, clearly describing it as it is, without engaging in a direct attack on people and their deeds.

When the Ruling for an Issue is not Specifically Mentioned in the Qur'ān

60) Some people justify an evil deed – such as smoking cigarettes and Sheesha or anything else that is similar – by saying that no text from the Qur'ān or Sunnah forbids that deed. How would you go about advising such people?

First, you must realize that the Islāmic *Sharī'ah* is appropriate and binding for all of time – from the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) until the coming of the Hour (i.e., the end of this world). Had all the detailed situations of life – old and new – been specifically mentioned in the Qur'ān, it would have consisted of a great many volumes; and the same can be said about the Sunnah.

But instead, the *Sharī'ah*, in terms of its revealed texts, is made up of general rules and principles, and under them fall an innumerable amount of specific issues. Let us consider these verses:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allāh (ﷻ) is Most Merciful to you. (Qur'ān 4:29)

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا۟ ٱلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ ٱلَّتِى جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَـٰمًا

> And give not unto the foolish your property which Allāh (ﷻ) has made a means of support for you. (Qur'ān 4:5)

And let us consider the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

> "Neither *Darar* (harm) nor *Dirar* (one of the opinions of the scholars: reciprocating evil with another evil)."[78]

This ḥadīth and the previous two verses represent general rules; let us apply them to smoking, to *Shīshah* (a form of tobacco that is smoked through long, winding pipes), and to anything that is similar.

- *Smoking is a form of suicide; refer to statistics that reveal this reality. Each year, many people die as a result of cigarette smoke. Therefore, smoking falls under the general ruling of this verse:*

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ

> And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). (Qur'ān 4:29).

- *Smoking cigarettes is a waste of wealth, for man benefits nothing from smoking. Allāh (ﷻ) called wealth a means of support for people:*

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا۟ ٱلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ ٱلَّتِى جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَـٰمًا

> And give not unto the foolish your property which Allāh (ﷻ) has made a means of support for you. (Qur'ān 4:5)

Wealth is a means of support for us in our religious and worldly concerns. Yet smoking and other similar practices contain neither religious nor worldly benefit in them.

- *The Prophet (ﷺ) said:*

"Neither *Darar* (harm) nor *Dirār* (one of the opinions of the scholars: reciprocating evil with another evil)."

By the consensus of doctors today, cigarette smoking is harmful, which is why some of the more developed countries forbid cigarette companies from advertising. Disbelievers inhabit some of those countries, yet they too forbid smoking, because they know of the harm that it entails. Therefore, smoking falls under the ruling imparted by this ḥadīth:

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[78] Related by Ibn Mājah (2340 and 2341) and Aḥmad (1/213). Aḥmad Shākir (2867) said, "Its *Isnād* is weak, because Jābir Ibn Al-Ja'fi (one of the narrators) is weak, but, being established in a narration with a good chain, the meaning of the ḥadith is correct. Ibn Mājah related it as well from the ḥadith of 'Ubādah Ibn Al-Ṣāmit (ﷺ)."

> "Neither *Darar* (harm) nor *Dirar* (one of the opinions of the scholars: reciprocating evil with another evil)."
>
> *Thus there is no need for a particular revealed text to mention smoking; the revealed text mentions the principle, which can then be applied to many different situations.*

Thus we see that from the salient aspects of Islāmic Law is that its revealed texts lay down general rules and principles, which can then be applied to an innumerable amount of minor and secondary issues, issues that will continue to grow in their variety until the Day of Resurrection.

You must Quit this Job

61) My co-workers constantly talk about lewd matters and dirty magazines. I reproach them for their vile speech, but to no avail. What should I do?

If, even after advising them, you cannot help effect a positive change in them or in their speech, then it is incumbent upon you to change jobs, because if you sit with people while they are sinning, though you are able to part from them, then you become a partner to them in their sin. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا
تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ

> And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ān) that when you hear the Verses of Allāh (ﷻ) being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other then that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. (Qur'ān 4:140)

If your co-workers do not change, you must search for a different job, so that you do not become a partner to them in their sins. And when Allāh (ﷻ) knows from your intention that you are trying to escape from their *Harām* (forbidden) speech, He (ﷻ) will make matters easy for you, for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ يُسْرًا

> And whosoever fears Allāh (ﷻ) and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him. (Qur'ān 65:4)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

And whosoever fears Allāh (ﷻ) and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. (Qur'ān 65:2,3)

This is Foolishness and Misguidance in One's Practice of the Religion

62) Do the following two verses indicate that one should not reproach a sinner for his sins?

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? (Qur'ān 61: 2)

۞ أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ
وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

Enjoin you *Al-Birr* (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allāh (ﷻ)) on the people and you forget (to practice it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture [the *Taurat* (Torah)]! Have you then no sense? (Qur'ān 2:44)

These verses in no way indicate that a sinner should not be reproached for his sins, but rather the verses point out the enormity of a certain kind of sin: for one to forbid evil while he himself perpetrates it, or for one to enjoin what is good while he himself does not do it. Both of these practices, inherently contradictory as they are, indicate foolishness and misguidance in one's practice of the Religion.

How can you forbid a deed that you yourself perpetrate? And how can you order others to perform a good deed when you do not perform it yourself?

Had you been sincere when you forbade others from a sin, you would have been the first to abstain from it. And had you been sincere when you ordered others to perform a good deed, you would have been the first to perform it. To not abstain from the former and to forsake the latter are acts that are contrary to

sound reasoning and to the teachings of the *Sharī'ah*, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) severely reproached the Children of Israel for the very same matter:

أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

Have you then no sense? (Qur'ān 2:44)

7- Inviting One's Family, Relatives, Neighbours, Etc.

How can One Achieve Harmony between these Noble Actions – Forbidding Evil, Inviting to the Way of Allāh, and Joining Ties of Relation?

63) While being kind and gentle in our manner, how can we combine between these – forbidding evil, joining ties of relation, and inviting to the way of Allāh?

A person who is endowed with wisdom is able to combine between all that you mentioned, while still being able to be gentle and kind in his manner. He speaks out against evil at times and remains quiet about certain matters that can be tolerated, all for the purpose of achieving overall betterment. For example, a person who is endowed with wisdom has a father who commits certain sins. He helps his father in matters that are lawful, but at the same time he can say to him, "If a person does such and such deed, his *Īmān* (faith) decreases, and he might even be punished in this world before he receives his punishment in the Hereafter." Perhaps the father will realize that his son is alluding to him, but he will love his son for being gentle and for finding a way to avoid a direct attack on his honour.

We must Improve Ourselves First

64) What is the Tafsīr (explanation) of this verse:

ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهْتَدَيْتُمْ

Take care of your ownselves, [do righteous deeds fear Allāh (ﷻ) much (abstain from all kind of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh (ﷻ) much (perform all kind of good deeds which He has ordained)]. If you follow the right guidance [and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong] no hurt can come to you from those who are in error. (Qur'ān 5:105)

Allāh (ﷻ) commanded us to better ourselves and to remain steadfast upon righteousness. In consequence, we will not be harmed when someone becomes misguided. Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿٢١﴾ لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم
بِمُصَيْطِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَّا مَن تَوَلَّىٰ وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَذَابَ
ٱلْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾

So remind them (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), you are only someone who reminds. You are not a dictator over them. Save the one who turns away and disbelieves. Then Allāh (ﷻ) will punish him with the greatest punishment. (Qur'ān 88:21-24)

So when a person becomes guided, those who sin cannot hurt him, but that does not mean that he should not remove evil. If people do not remove evil, then the time will draw near when Allāh (ﷻ) will send a punishment that will embrace everyone:

وَٱتَّقُواْ فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ
مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً وَٱعْلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥﴾

And fear the *Fitnah* (affliction and trial, etc.) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong (but it may afflict all the good and the bad people), and know that Allāh (ﷻ) is severe in punishment. (Qur'an 8:25)

Sinners cannot harm you in the Hereafter by causing your good deeds to decrease or your bad deeds to increase, unless you are derelict in your duties of inviting to the truth, enjoining good, and forbidding evil. Being derelict in these duties harms you, but as you can see, the source of this harm is you and not evildoers. In such a situation, it is you who have not fulfilled the duties that Allāh (ﷻ) commanded you with, so it is correct to say that you are not following the right guidance that Allāh (ﷻ) stipulated in this verse:

لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهْتَدَيْتُمْ

If you follow the right guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who are in error. (Qur'ān 5:105)

Enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, and calling to the way of Allāh – whoever does not do these duties is not following right guidance in the complete sense.

One should Invite those Nearest to Him

65) What is the Islāmic ruling in regards to performing Da'wah in foreign countries – Arab or otherwise? With much enthusiasm, many Du'āt (callers) dedicate their time to Da'wah efforts abroad.

In my view, one should invite those who are closest to him, for upon first sending His Messenger – Muḥammad (ﷺ) – with the duty of conveying Islām, Allāh (ﷻ) said:



And warn your tribe (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) of near kindred. (Qur'ān 26:214)

So if there is opportunity for one to perform *da'wah* in his own country, he should not leave it to go elsewhere, not even to a neighbouring country. But in a situation wherein one does not have the opportunity of performing *da'wah* in his own country – for example, the people in his country are upon right guidance – then he should go to the nearest neighbouring country; and if the situation is the same there, then the country nearest to that one, and so on.

And Allāh (ﷻ) said to the believers in general:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَـٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ
وَلْيَجِدُوا۟ فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً

O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you. (Qur'ān 9:123)

It is not from wisdom for one to go to America or Russia to perform *da'wah*, when the people of his own country are in need of one who invites them to the teachings of Islām.

Hence, wisdom dictates that one begin with the people of his country before all others; and even before them, with his own family and relatives. By following this approach, one applies the command which Allāh (ﷻ) gave to His Prophet (ﷺ).

The *Dā ʿī* must Call to the Way of Allāh, Even when People Mock him

66) What is the ruling in regards to those who deride the truth when I invite them to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) (i.e., to Islām)? Is it permissible for me to stop associating with them? In response to my invitation, they say, "Your Daʿwah should be only be directed to your own family."

The *dāʿī* must invite others to Islām, even if people mock or deride him. When his people mocked him, Noah (عليه السلام) – the first Messenger – said:

إِن تَسْخَرُوا۟ مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ

"If you mock at us, so do we mock at you likewise for your mocking." (Qur'ān 11:38)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَجْرَمُوا۟ كَانُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا۟ بِهِمْ
يَتَغَامَزُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَإِذَا ٱنقَلَبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمُ ٱنقَلَبُوا۟ فَكِهِينَ ﴿٣١﴾
وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَمَآ أُرْسِلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ
حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾
عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

Verily! (During the worldly life) those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed. And whenever they passed by them, used to wink one to another (in mockery); And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting; And when they saw them they said: "Verily! These have indeed gone astray!" But they (disbelievers and sinners) had not been sent as watchers over them (the believers). But this Day (the Day of Resurrection) those who believe will laugh at the disbelievers. On (high) thrones, looking (at all things). (Qur'ān 83:29-35)

Even when people mock you, you must still invite them to Islām; but in my view, were you to invite the kind of people you described one person at a time, you would be doing better. When you are alone with one of them, invite him to

the way of Allāh. This should have the effect of weakening their unity, but more importantly you will be following a wise course.

You must Invite to the Way of Allāh without Losing Hope

67) When I visit my relatives, they keep the television on, and I can't ignore it, because they set the volume at a high setting. I have reproached them, but to no avail. [By staying with them] am I sinning? And how should I go about inviting others from the youth?

It is incumbent upon the youth to perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) without losing hope, for how many people did Allāh (ﷻ) guide after they had been upon misguidance? And how many people did Allāh (ﷻ) guide to righteousness after they had been corrupted? Therefore, one should continue to convey the message of Islām, being patient, and waiting for success from Allāh (ﷻ).

But for one to participate in a *Ḥarām* (forbidden) act – as you have described – is not permissible. So you may not stay, watching television when something *Ḥarām* (forbidden) is being shown; and you may not remain, listening to the radio when something *Ḥarām* is being played. If giving sincere advice to others does not help, then one must leave the place wherein *Ḥarām* is being perpetrated. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> "Whosoever from you sees evil, then let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart."

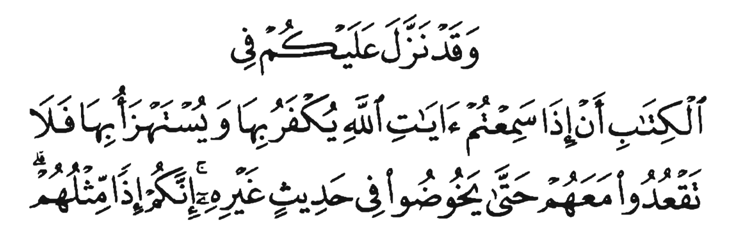
One who remains in the company of those who are perpetrating a sin is like them: what is equivalent to their sin is written against him. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِىٓ
ءَايَٰتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦ ۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ مَعَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

And when you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) see those who engage in false conversation about Our Verses (of the Qur'ān) by mocking at them, stay away from them till they turn to another topic. And if *Shayṭān* (Satan) causes you to

> forget, then after the remembrance sit not you in the company of those people who are the *Ẓālimūn* (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.) (Qur'ān 6:68)

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:



> And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ān) that when you hear the Verses of Allāh (ﷻ) being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. (Qur'ān 4:140)

It is not permissible, then, for you to remain in a place wherein evil is being heard or seen or performed. But at other times, when no evil is being perpetrated in the home of your relatives, remain with them and advise them as much as you can.

As for the second part of your question, I call upon the youth who have been blessed with guidance from Allāh (ﷻ) to bring together as many young people as they can, because the youth are better influenced by those of their own age than they are by those who are older than them.

It is upon you, the youth (may Allāh bless your efforts), to strive, working to bring together as many young people as you can, so that Allāh (ﷻ) guides others through you. You should neither belittle your efforts nor rush matters, by deluding yourself into thinking that the misguided person will change overnight. On the contrary, it may take him a week, a month, or even longer to change, but what is important is for you to show patience when guiding your brothers to the truth.

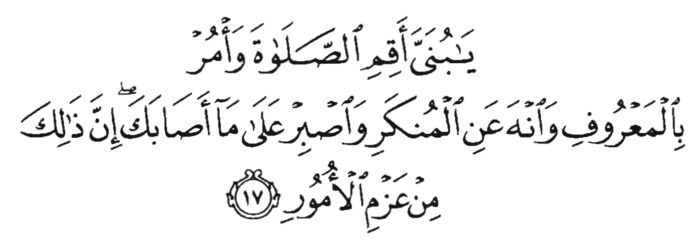
My Older Brother Derides me because I Follow my Religion

68) I have an older brother who puts me down a great deal by saying that I am a hypocrite and that I listen to music when I am left alone in my room. He says that, as time goes on, I will stop practising this Religion and that I will succumb to temptation. I have tried to give him sincere advice for a long time now, but he seems not to like those who give sincere advice. What should I do with him? Please advise me, may Allāh reward you well.

You must not lose hope, feeling that he cannot improve, for there are many people whom Allāh (ﷻ) guided only after a period wherein they were upon misguidance. Continue to advise him frequently, and even give him some beneficial books and tapes as gifts, so that perhaps Allāh will guide him through you. It is authentically established from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he (ﷺ) said to 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه):

> "For Allāh to guide one man through you is better for you than for you to have red camels (one of the most precious kinds of wealth at the time)."

And as Luqmān said to his son, order to what is good and be patient when harm befalls you:



> "O my son! *Aqim-aṣ-Ṣalāt* (perform *Al-Ṣalāt*), enjoin (people) from *Al-Ma rūf*- (Islāmic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from *Al-Munkar* (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allāh (ﷻ), polytheism of all kinds and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befall you. Verily! These are some of the important commandments ordered by Allāh (ﷻ) with no exemption. (Qur'ān 31:17)

A Sincere *Dā' ī* to the Way of Allāh Only Wants the Betterment of his Brothers

69) I have advised my wife and brothers [to follow the truth] but they have not heeded my advice; in fact, they cut me off whenever I try to speak sincerely with them. What should I do?

The situation you have described is a common one; many men and women complain about it. The problem is that, when some people are invited to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām), they think that the *dā' i* (caller) only wants to show his superiority over them, gain control over them, or exact revenge from them, and all of these ideas are, without a doubt, from the *Shayṭān* (Devil).

The *dā' ī* – one who invites to Islām - only wants betterment for his brothers and their guidance to the truth. But I will say this to the questioner: Be patient, hope for your reward from Allāh, and know that you will be rewarded for any harm that is inflicted upon you while you are performing *da wah* to the way of Allāh. When the message of a *dā' ī* is accepted, he will not only have fulfilled his duty but he will also have achieved the reward that results from guiding others, the reward about which the Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه):

> "Go forth deliberately (and cautiously)...By Allāh, for Allāh to guide a single man through you is better for you than for you to have red camels (red camels were then considered to be one of the most precious kinds of wealth among the Arabs)."

And if the *dā' ī's* message is rejected and if he is harmed for Allāh, then again, he will be rewarded twice: first for inviting to the way of Allāh (i.e., to Islām), and second for the harm that befell him while he was striving for Islām.

The Messengers (عليهم السلام) were harmed yet they remained patient. Allāh (عز وجل) said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ
رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأُوذُوا حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَـٰهُمْ نَصْرُنَا

> Verily, (many) Messengers were denied before you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), but with patience they bore the denial, and they were hurt, till Our help reached them. (Qur'ān 6:34)

My brother, others may harm you while you are inviting to the teachings of Islām, but do not allow that to prevent you from the truth or to make you turn

back on your heels, a kind of weakness that is shown by one whose *Īmān* is not firm. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِىَ فِى ٱللَّهِ جَعَلَ
فِتْنَةَ ٱلنَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ

> Of mankind are some who say: "We believe in Allāh (ﷻ)," but if they are made to suffer for the sake of Allāh (ﷻ), they consider the trial of mankind as Allāh's punishment. (Qur'ān 29:10)

My advice to you is to continue inviting your family to Islām, without losing hope; and my advice to them is to accept the truth, regardless of whether its messenger is one who is of equal, greater, or lower status.

A Father should Invite his Children in a Way that is Better

70) Some fathers are made to suffer because their children do not practice Islām, at least not completely. Their children might, for instance, perform their prayers on time and the other obligatory deeds of Islām, yet at the same time they perpetrate certain sins, such as watching movies, dealing in usury, shaving their beards, not always attending prayer in congregation, and so on. What should a practising father's stance be in dealing with such children? Should he be severe with them or gentle?

I think that he should invite them and progress with them in gradual steps: if they are committing a number of sins, he should begin with the most serious offence, discussing it with them over and over again until they desist from it. What should be remembered here is that sins differ; some sins are so grave, that one should not allow his son to live with him as long as he is doing them. Other sins, however, are less grave. An important and true principle to remember is thus expressed: "If it is inevitable that at least one of two evils must occur, then to perpetrate the one that is less severe is justice."

An opposite problem is also common: some youth suffer from having parents who are upon misguidance, who oppose them in many issues because they are following the truth. My advice to such parents is that they should fear Allāh (ﷻ) regarding their own selves and regarding their children. Furthermore, they should be thankful to Allāh (ﷻ) for having children that are upright and that are

following correct guidance. The uprightness of children benefits a parent both in life and after death. The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "When a person dies, his deeds are cut off except for three: perpetual charity, knowledge that is benefited by, or a righteous son who supplicates for him."[79]

Sometimes, parents might order their child to sin; in such instances, the child does not have to obey them;[80] rather, he should go contrary to their command, even if they become angry. In this regard, one is not being undutiful to his parents but is instead being dutiful and good to them, because had he acquiesced and performed the sin they ordered him to perform, then even more sins would be written against them. So if one refrains from a sin that his parents commanded him to perform, he is in fact being dutiful to them, having saved them from an increase in sin.

Therefore, a child should never obey his parents when they order him to sin. But in situations wherein parents forbid their child from performing a good deed, that child must understand that certain good deeds are not compulsory, i.e., one does not sin by abstaining from them. In regards to such deeds, one should look at the greater benefit. If one feels that the greater benefit is in going against his parents, who ordered him to not perform a voluntary good deed, then one may do so, but one should humour them, for instance, by performing the good deed in private. But in the case that one cannot secretly perform the good deed, then he may perform it openly, but at the same time he should try to convince his parents that neither he nor they are harmed when he performs that deed.

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[79] Related by Muslim (1631) in the chapter, "What Rewards a Person Receives after he Dies," from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ).

[80] This is based on a ḥadīth related by 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (ﷺ), wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "There is no obedience [to anyone] in the disobedience of Allāh; obedience is only in what is good." Al-Bukhārī related this ḥadīth (7145), in the chapter, "It is Compulsory to Obey Rulers unless it is in Sin, in which Case it is Forbidden To Obey Them." There is another ḥadīth that is very similar to this last one: "There is no obedience for a created being when that involves disobeying the Creator." This ḥadīth, however, is weak; it is *Mursal* from *Al-Ḥasan*. In *Sharḥ Al-Sunnah* (10/44), Al-Arnā'ūṭ said, "Its chain is weak." Nonetheless, the previous ḥadīth and other *aḥādīth* attest to it.

It is not Permissible for One to Be Negligent in Performing *Da' wah* to his Family While He is Active in Performing *Da' wah* to Others

71) What is your view regarding someone who says the following: "If I am absent from home for a long time, having traveled abroad in the way of Allāh, my children might in the meantime deviate from the teachings of Islām. I only leave them in answer to Allāh's command, and regarding the deviation of my children, I find solace in the fact that Noah's son was not guided"?

Whoever said this statement made his *ijtihād* (judgement) but not every *mujtahid* (one who makes *ijtihād*; here the Shaykh is using the word *mujtahid* according to its meaning in the language and not according to its meaning in the *Sharī' ah*, when it is used for the Muslim scholar who is qualified to make *ijtihād*) is correct in his judgement. It is compulsory upon one to remain with his family if he fears that they will otherwise go astray. Allāh (ﷻ) says:



And warn your tribe (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) of near kindred. (Qur'ān 26:214)

Here, Allāh (ﷻ) ordered the Prophet (ﷺ) to begin with his relatives. One clearly has the personal duty of looking after his family, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Each one of you is a shepherd, and each one of you is responsible for his flock."[81]

On the other hand, inviting others to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is a societal and not a personal duty: if enough people are doing this duty, it no longer remains a responsibility for the rest. And it is well known that it is not correct to give preference to a societal obligation over a personal one. Similarly, it is not correct to be concerned with the guidance of those who are far away while one is afraid for his family. Therefore one must not be negligent regarding his duties towards his family – his sons, daughters, wives, sisters, mothers, etc. Being afraid for their

[81] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (893) in the chapter, "*Al-Jumu' ah* (The Friday Prayer) in Towns and Cities." He related it elsewhere as well. Muslim related it (1829) in the chapter, "The Superiority of the Just *Imām*..." from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ).

safety and guidance, he must not go forth to a duty that is not as binding upon him, for as we said, taking care of his family's guidance is a personal obligation while taking care of the guidance of those who are far away is a societal obligation that does not rest solely on his shoulders. The person who made the aforementioned statement should reflect on what I just said and come to the realization that he was wrong in putting others before his family, for whom he is directly responsible.

You must Continue to Advise your Neighbour if he Persists in Remaining Behind from the Congregational Prayer

72) My neighbour does not attend congregational prayer in the Masjid; how should I go about advising him?

You should develop a rapport with him by visiting him and inviting him to your home. Whenever hearts unite, circumstances improve: so in your case, your neighbour will find it easier in his heart to accept from you when your relations with him are based on friendship and brotherhood. You can inform him that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about himself that he intended to burn down the houses of those who remained behind from the congregational prayer.[82] So you should warn him not to remain behind from the congregational prayer, but at the same time you should encourage him by clarifying that prayer in the *Masjid* in congregation is better than the prayer of the individual by 27 degrees.[83] Resort to a mix of warning and encouragement, so that perhaps Allāh (ﷻ) will guide him. If he does not heed your advice after a number of conversations, then you can refer the matter to those in authority, and thus free your conscience regarding his situation.

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[82] Based on a ḥadīth related by Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ), wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "By the One who has my soul in His hand, I had intended to order for firewood to be gathered, to then order for the prayer – then for its call to be made – then to order a man to lead the people [in prayer], and then to remain behind, going to men [who remained behind from the congregational prayer] and burning down their houses." Bukhārī related this ḥadīth (644) and Muslim also related it (651, 251, 252, 253).

[83] Based on a ḥadīth related by 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ), wherein the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "The congregational prayer is superior to the individual prayer by 27 degrees." Al-Bukhārī (645) related it, and Muslim (650) related it as well.

8- Differences of Opinion among Scholars and Making Accusations against them

The Principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah* Regarding Issues wherein there is Disagreement among the People of Knowledge

73) In matters wherein scholars disagree, what are the principles of Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah? And what is the guiding rule in such matters?

If the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah* disagree due to the fact that each made his own *ijtihād* (inferred a ruling from revealed texts when the ruling in a matter is not specifically and clearly mentioned in those texts, so that there is no room for doubt) and if the issue of disagreement is one wherein *ijtihād* is valid, then as a rule, their difference of opinion must not lead to division and enmity. When one differs with me in an issue, basing his view on proofs, then in reality, he has not differed with me, because our methodology is the same, each of us having based our ruling on proofs. We are, therefore, of the same thinking. And we must remember that differences in the Muslim Nation have existed since the time of the Messenger (ﷺ), and have continued to exist until this day.

There are issues, however, wherein disagreement is not valid. These are issues wherein people hold views that are contrary to the views that the Companions (ﷺ) and the *tābi'īūn* held, in issues of belief, for instance. People only began to differ regarding issues of belief after the best generations passed away, i.e., differences only became widespread after the passing away of the best generations. It is true that some differences in matters of belief did occur while some Companions were still alive; however, it must be understood that when we say the generation of the Companions passed away, we do not mean that every Companion died. A generation passes away when most of its people, and not its entire people, die. By the wisdom of Allāh (ﷻ), He (ﷻ) made generations overlap one another. So had we said that the generation of the Companions did

not pass away until the last of them died, we would have included many years from the generation of the *tābi'īūn* (the next generation) as well. Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, "We rule that a generation has expired when most of its people die; for example, when most of the Companions had died, and only tens or a few hundreds of them remained, their generation, for all effective purposes, passed away. We can say the same for the generation of the *tābi'īūn*, the generation after their generation, and all generations until this day."

With this understanding, we can say that the best generations had passed away, without anyone having differed in issues of belief; issues regarding which disagreement spread only later on. Hence, those who differ with us in matters of belief oppose not only our views but also the views of the Companions and the tābi'iūn, and so we censure them, not accepting from them their difference of opinion.

As for issues regarding which people differed during the generation of the Companions (ﷺ); issues wherein *ijtihād* is valid, then it is inevitable that disagreement regarding those issues continues to remain with us today. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "When the judge makes *ijtihād* and issues a correct ruling, then he has two rewards. If he makes ijtihād and [issues an] incorrect ruling, then he has one [reward]."[84]

One might ask, "Are differences of opinion regarding Allāh's attributes valid?" We say to him, no, because difference of opinion in this issue falls outside of the Companions' methodology. No two Companions disagreed about Allāh's attributes; each one of them acknowledged that Allāh's attributes are true, having a true reality that does not allow for comparison to the attributes of creation. What proves that they all agreed in this matter? The proof: in the *tafsīr* of verses or *aḥādīth* that speak about Allāh's attributes, nothing whatsoever that indicates a difference of opinion is related from the Companions. If no different views are related from the Companions in the issue of Allāh's attributes, this means that they accept what the Qur'ān and Sunnah clearly indicate (i.e., that Allāh's attributes are real and have a true reality that allows for no comparison to the attributes of the creation). Otherwise, the Companions would have expressed their different understanding, for the Qur'ān is in clear Arabic, the Sunnah is in clear Arabic, and they knew the Arabic language; so had any different interpretation been required, they would have passed that on to us.

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[84] Related by Al-Bukhārī (7352) in the chapter, "The Reward Of The Judge When He Is Correct And When He Makes A Mistake." Muslim related it as well (1716), in the chapter, "Clarifying The Reward Of A Judge When He Makes *Ijtihad* And Is Correct Or Is Mistaken," from the ḥadīth of 'Amr Ibn Al-'Āṣ (ﷺ).

In issues related to Allāh's attributes, if nothing that is contrary to the apparent meaning of the Qur'an's verses and the Prophet's Sunnah is related from the Companions, then we know for sure that their view is in harmony with the apparent meanings of those verses and *aḥādīth*. This is why we censure all those who differ with our pious predecessors in issues related to Allāh's attributes; and if you want, you can say in all issues that relate to *īmān* (faith) – *īmān* in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last day, and Divine Preordainment, both the good and bad of it. We must censure anyone who disagrees with the Companions in these six pillars of belief.

Even if Scholars were to Review and Reassess Issues wherein there is Disagreement, Differences of Opinion would Continue to Exist

74) Why are not issues of disagreement studied and reassessed, so that the Nation can unite together?

In my view, were all scholars to get together in any place, there would still be differences of opinion among them, even if they were to re-examine issues of disagreement over and over again. Nonetheless, it is obligatory upon scholars to fear Allāh (ﷻ) as much as they can: the truth and not desire should always be the basis for any opinion they hold.

When scholars disagree, the common Muslim should follow that scholar whom he deems to be closest to the truth – because of his knowledge, his Religion, and his trustworthiness. But as for us gathering the people upon one view in all issues; doing so is apparently an impossible task.

Issues Pertaining to Beliefs are Important

75) To be sure, cooperation between Du'āt (callers) is necessary to the success of their Da'wah and to their message being accepted by the people. Today there are many Du'āt that are working for Islām, with each having his own method and style, which is fine, but some among them differ in important matters, such as 'Aqīdah (beliefs). My question is this: What are the guiding principles for working and cooperating with the different Du'āt? We are in need of your direction in this issue; may Allāh grant you success.

Without a doubt, the guiding principle in issues of disagreement is that we should do what Allāh (ﷻ) ordered us to do in this verse:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَـٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ
تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

O you who believe! Obey Allāh (ﷻ) and obey the Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in any thing amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), if you believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'ān 4:59)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَىْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ

And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 42:10)

When we see anyone make a mistake in matters of belief or action, we must clarify the truth for him. If he accepts the truth, then that is from Allāh's blessings upon him; if not, then that is a trial for him from Allāh (ﷻ). We must point out his mistake and warn against it as much as we can, but at the same time we should not lose hope, for Allāh (ﷻ) guided people, so that they joined the ranks of *Ahl al-Sunnah* after a period wherein they had been following grave innovations. Many of us are aware of Abū Al-Ḥasan Al-Ash'arī's story; he remained a follower of *'Aitizāl* ideas (ideas of the deviant *mu'tazilī* school) for forty years of his life. Then he came closer to the truth for a while, and then Allāh (ﷻ) guided him to the upright path, to the school of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh have mercy on him), which is the school of *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah*.

In reality, then, issues of belief are important, and we must guide others to the truth in them, just as we should guide others in matters that pertain to actions (i.e., to jurisprudence). The scope of disagreement in issues that pertain to actions is much wider than it is in issues that pertain to beliefs, for in general, scholars (of *Ahl al-Sunnah*) do not disagree in beliefs except in very few matters – such as the Hellfire ceasing to exist, punishment during *Al-Barzakh*, the scales, that which is weighed in the scales, and so on. But if you were to compare issues of disagreement in beliefs to issues of disagreement in jurisprudence (actions), you would find that the scope of the former is very limited – and all praise is for

Allāh. Nonetheless, we must guide others to the truth, regardless of whether they have erred in matters of belief or action.

Three Reasons why a *Faqīh* will Refrain from Issuing a Ruling in a Particular Issue

76) What should we understand when we hear that a Faqīh has refrained from issuing a particular ruling (Fatāwā)?

At times, a *faqīh* may be undecided, unwilling to issue a ruling in a specific matter. It seems as though the questioner is asking about the reason why a *faqīh* would take such a stance in certain issues.

Well, at times the *mufṭi* may feel that various proofs impart opposite rulings in a specific issue; for instance, one proof indicates that an action is compulsory while another indicates that it is *Ḥarām* (forbidden). For this reason (i.e., the *mufṭi* is not convinced that one proof is stronger than the other), the *mufṭi* may abstain from issuing a ruling.

At other times, the *mufṭi* may refrain from issuing a ruling not because the proofs themselves are unclear to him, but because he is unsure of how to apply them to a specific situation; for example, does a particular proof apply to a specific situation only or to all situations?

And yet at other times, the *mufṭi* may know for sure that a verse or a *ḥadīth* indicates, for instance, that an action is compulsory; he also knows that it applies to a specific situation, but he does not think that the overriding benefit is in issuing a ruling, and so he refrains, fearing some evil that might result were he to issue his ruling. We can find instances of this occurring very often in the sayings of our pious predecessors – may Allāh have mercy on them.

'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) is a prominent example in this regard; he would often issue a ruling based on what he felt to be the overriding benefit. He often had occasion to do this because the period of his caliphate was long. And in issuing rulings, he (ﷺ) was wise and was guided to the truth.

He forbade a man who divorced his wife three times in one sitting from taking her back. 'Umar (ﷺ) ruled that she was forbidden upon him, even though three statements of divorce in one sitting was considered to be one divorce during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ), during the caliphate of Abū Bakr (ﷺ), and for two years during the caliphate of 'Umar (ﷺ). Because of the situation during his time, 'Umar (ﷺ) thought that there was greater benefit in his new ruling.

So to summarize, these are the three reasons why a scholar will hold back from issuing a ruling:

- He cannot reconcile between opposing proofs
- He is unsure whether the ruling that is imparted by a proof applies to a particular situation only or to all situations
- There are conflicting benefits (so he rules according to the greater benefit)

This Statement is too General in its Implications, and so it Needs to be Explained

77) What is your view regarding the statement of some, "We unite in issues that we agree upon, and we excuse one another in matters that we disagree about?"

This statement is too general in its implications:

- Its first part – "We unite in issues that we agree upon" – is the truth.
- Its second part – "We excuse one another in matters that we disagree about" – requires a more detailed explanation.

If difference of opinion in an issue is based on valid *ijtihād*, then yes, we should excuse one another, and moreover, our hearts should not differ. But if *ijtihād* is not valid (when the ruling in a matter is clearly expressed in the *Sharī'ah*), then we do not excuse those who oppose truth; rather, we must make it clear to them that they must submit to the truth.

It is not Permissible for *Du'āt* to Break off Ties from one Another

78) Is it permissible for Du'āt (callers) to break off ties from one another because they disagree about the correct manner in which one should perform Da'wah?

It is not permissible for believers to disassociate themselves from one another, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "It is not permissible for a believer to sever ties with his brother for more than three [days]."

Even when someone perpetrates a sin, it is not permissible for us to sever ties with him, the exception being when there is benefit in doing so; for example, by disassociating ourselves from him, we are confident that he will refrain from his sin. For this reason the Prophet (ﷺ) temporarily cut off ties from Ka'ab Ibn Mālik (ﷺ) and his two companions (ﷺ), which occurred after they remained behind from the battle of *Tabūk*.

Therefore, when there is some overriding benefit in breaking off ties from evildoers, then we break off ties from them; otherwise, we do not. This is the ruling regarding evildoers; as for *du'āt* who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), it is not permissible for them to disassociate themselves from one another just because they take different approaches in performing their *da'wah*. Instead, each one of them should try to benefit and learn from the approach of others, especially when another *dā'ī's* approach is more effective.

The Impermissibility of Cursing a Scholar who Holds Views Contradictory to the Majority of Scholars

79) Suppose that a man holds an opinion that is contrary to what is held by [most of] the people of knowledge. Should we hate that man for Allāh? And should we be severe in criticizing him?

No. If someone were to oppose the majority of scholars in an issue wherein an acceptable proof establishes the correct view – which is contrary to his – it is not permissible to curse him or even to be harsh with him; furthermore, we should not incite people to hate him. Instead, we should meet with him and discuss the matter with him directly.

In issues that people do not clearly understand, one might be led to believe that there is consensus among the scholars to support his view. But had he researched the issue, he might have found that a scholar who holds an opposing view has such cogent proofs with him that he should in fact follow that scholar, submitting to his view.

It is true that for the most part and in most issues, the correct opinion is with the majority of scholars; nonetheless, it is not always with them. The scholars who dissent from the majority in a given issue might have with them the stronger proof; hence as long as there is no consensus in an issue, we should not scold one who follows the dissenting view; nor should we backbite him or harbour

malice towards him. Rather, we should get in touch with him and research the issue together, discussing the matter with the goal of arriving at the truth. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

> And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember, then is there any that will remember (or receive admonition)? (Qur'ān 54: 17)

If one sincerely wants to ascertain the truth and if one contemplates the Qur'ān, then Allāh (ﷻ) will make the truth easy for him. Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allāh have mercy on him) said in *Al-'Aqīdah Al-Wāsitiyyah*, "Whenever one contemplates the Qur'ān, seeking guidance from it, then the way to the truth will become clear to him."[85]

"And if you Differ in anything amongst yourselves, Refer it to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ))"

80) What steps do you feel need to be taken in order to ensure cooperation among the ranks of Du'āt?

To be sure, we can ascertain the principles of how to act in any matter of disagreement by referring to what Allāh (ﷻ) commanded in this verse:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ
تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

> O you who believe! Obey Allāh (ﷻ) and obey the Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in any thing amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), if you believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'ān 4:59)

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[85] Refer to the commentary of *Al- Aqīdah Al-Wāsitiyyah* by Shaykh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, authored by Al-'Allāmah Muḥammad Khalil Harrās (pg. 103 from the 1407H [Arabic] edition).

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ

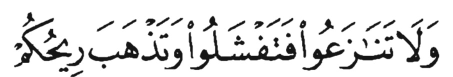
And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 42:10)

When someone goes astray in his beliefs or in his actions, we must discuss the matter with him until he clearly sees the truth and then returns to it. We should point out his mistake to him and warn others not to make it as well. Yet we must not lose hope, for Allāh (ﷻ) guided many people who were previously following grave innovations, so that they ended up joining the ranks of *Ahl al-Sunnah*. A famous example in this regard is Abul-Ḥasan Al-Asha'ari (may Allāh have mercy on him); he followed *mu'tazilī* teachings for more than forty years of his life. Thereafter, he changed his views, coming closer to the truth, until finally, Allāh (ﷻ) guided him to the upright path, to the school of *imām* Aḥmad (may Allāh have mercy on him), which is the school of *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah*. We must understand that issues that pertain to our beliefs are especially important, yet whether a particular issue pertains to beliefs or actions, we should advise one another to the truth.

Division among Young, Practising Muslims Weakens their Ranks

81) Within the ranks of the Muslim youth, you will find some who censure others or even disassociate themselves from others, despite the fact that they are all practising Muslims. What advice can you give to the young, practising Muslim who is faced with this problem?

No doubt, it is sad to see young, practising Muslims divided; to see them repudiating one another; to see them feeling enmity and hatred for those who do not agree with them in their methodology. And to be sure, such matters lead only to a harmful end – division; which pleases the devils from the *jinn* and from mankind; devils who do not want the people of good to be united upon anything. Devils – from the *jinn* and from mankind – want Muslims to become divided because they know that division weakens their strength, a problem that Allāh (ﷻ) warns us about in the following verses of the Qur'ān:



> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

وَلَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ

> And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. (Qur'ān 3:105)

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ
مِنْهُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ

> Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kind of religious sects), you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) have no concern in them in the least. (Qur'ān 6:159)

شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ
وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ

> He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhim, Mūsa and 'Īsa saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Allāh (ﷻ) forbade us from becoming divided, and He (ﷻ) clarified the evil results of division. It is compulsory upon us to be one Nation, united upon one word, for division is tantamount to corruption and to the weakness of the Muslim Nation.

The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) differed among themselves in certain issues, but they were not divided, nor did they harbour enmity or hatred towards one another. Difference of opinion occurred among them even during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). For example, after the battle of Al-Ahzāb was over and when Jibrīl (ﷺ) came to the Prophet (ﷺ), ordering him to go to Banu Quraydhah because the people there broke their covenant, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to his Companions,

"Let no one from you pray *'Aṣr*, except in Banī Quraydhah (i.e., until you reach Banī Quraydhah)."[86]

The Companions (ﷺ) had departed from Al-Madīnah, and though they had not yet reached their destination, the time for the *'Aṣr* prayer was drawing to an end, and so the Companions differed among themselves. Some among them said, "We will only pray [*'Aṣr*] in Banī Quraydhah, even if the sun sets, for the Messenger (ﷺ) said, 'Let no one from you pray *'Aṣr*, except in Banī Quraydhah.' So we say, 'We have heard and obeyed.'"

Others among them said, "Verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) intended by that [statement] that we should hasten and travel quickly, but he did not want us to delay the prayer." News of what happened reached the Prophet (ﷺ), and he (ﷺ) did not censure any of them, nor did he scold anyone from the two groups for their particular interpretation of his (ﷺ) command. And they themselves did not become divided due to the different way in which each group understood the Prophet's ḥadīth. Similarly, it is compulsory upon us to not become divided; instead, we should be one Nation.

As for division, when it is said that so and so is from the *Salafīs*, from the *Ikhwānīs*, from the *Tabhlighīs*, from the *Sunniyīn*, from the *Muqallidīn*, and so on, then what results is division among us, and this poses a great danger. If we know that the present-day Islāmic awakening is made up of groups that repudiate one another, we should consequently know that whatever good there is that we hope to achieve from this awakening will not be realized.

What is the solution to this problem? The solution is that we follow the way of the Companions (ﷺ) and that we realize that any differences that result from valid *ijtihād* must have no effect on our unity; rather, such differences represent a kind of harmony among us. How so? I might disagree with you in a particular issue because the proofs that I recognize to be strongest indicate a ruling that is opposite to the ruling you hold to be true; meanwhile, you disagree with me for the same reason: the proofs you recognize to be strongest indicate a ruling that is contrary to the ruling that I hold to be true. In reality, we do not differ, because each one of us based his view on that proof which he felt was strongest. The key here is this: both of us are looking for the strongest proof, and each one of us

[86] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (946) in the chapter, "The Seeker and that which is Sought..." Muslim related it as well (1770), in the chapter, "Hastening to Attack..."from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr (ﷺ). And this is the wording according to the narration of Muslim: "Let no one pray *Al-Ẓuhr*, except in Banī Quraydhah (i.e., until you reach Banī Quraydhah)."

only holds his opinion because it is based on what he feels to be that strongest proof. Then I should commend you because you showed courage in opposing me and in defending that proof [which you felt was strongest]; meanwhile, I am your brother and companion. Because of the kind of disagreement that exists between us – each one is upholding what he feels to be the strongest proof – it is incumbent upon me not to harbour any ill will towards you. As I said, I should instead commend you for your stance, and you should commend me for mine.

If one of us were to force the other to accept his opinion, I would not be worthier of forcing you to accept my opinion than you are of forcing me to accept yours. For this reason I say that it is compulsory for us to consider there to be harmony among us whenever we differ in issues that are based on valid *ijtihād*.

One might say, "This remedy you prescribed is not easily administered to the common people (i.e., to those who are not scholars or students of knowledge), so what is the solution?"

The solution is for the leaders of each group to gather in order to discuss and mutually research issues wherein they disagree among themselves, so that through this process, they can unite (although they might not agree on every single issue) [and the commoners will surely follow suit].

One year, at Mina, an issue came before me and other brothers; one that might sound strange to you. Two groups, each consisting of three or four men, came to us, and each one of them was blaming those of the other group, cursing them, and accusing them of disbelief. And all of them were *ḥujāj* (pilgrims who were performing *Ḥajj*).

What happened was that those from the first group said, "When one of them (i.e., one from the other group) stands to pray, he places his right hand on his left hand, over his chest, and this is disbelief in the Sunnah." The Sunnah according to the first group is that the worshipper should let his arms hang, so that his hands are resting at his sides. Those of the other group said, "To place one's hands at one's sides instead of placing one's right hand over the left one is disbelief, and it is permissible to curse one who does so." The disagreement among them was bitter, but by the grace of Allāh (ﷻ) and then by the efforts of the brothers present, who clarified the fact that the Muslim Nation must be united; the men from both groups left, with each one of them feeling love and brotherhood for the others.

Observe how the *Shayṭān* played with them in this issue of disagreement and how their differences led them to accusing one another of being disbelievers. The issue of disagreement was not about one of the pillars of Islām; nor was it about one of the obligatory deeds in Islām; it was about a Sunnah action. The people of knowledge rule that, during prayer, it is Sunnah to place one's right

hand over one's left hand, over one's chest. Yet there is another group of scholars - albeit a smaller group – who hold that it is Sunnah to let one's arms hang down, so that one's hands are resting at one's sides. The truth in this issue is with the former group, for in a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī, Sahl Ibn Sa'ad (ﷺ) said, "The people were ordered that, during the prayer, each man should place his right hand on his left arm."[87]

I pray to Allāh (ﷻ) that, in spite of the differences among the *du'āt* in their methodology of performing *da'wah*, He (ﷻ) bless them with unity and mutual love and hearts that are free from rancor. The more sincere everyone makes their intentions, the quicker matters will improve. But if intentions are not correct and if each person admires his own opinion, without being concerned with what others have to say, then success for all will be held back, becoming a distant reality.

Note: If differences occur in matters that pertain to beliefs (*'Aqīdah*), then those differences must be corrected and the truth must be clarified. Also, if a person differs with views that were held by our pious predecessors, then we must censure him, and we must warn him not tread a path that is opposite to the one that was followed by the best generations of Muslims.

Why is there Division and Disagreement among the Youth?

82) What causes the division and differences that sometimes occur among the youth? Is it because the youth do not unite around the scholars? Is it because there is a weak link between scholars and students of knowledge? Or is it because there are so few scholars today that have dedicated themselves to the pursuit of knowledge?

That some of the youth do not unite around trusted scholars – trusted in their knowledge and in their practice of the Religion – is a major factor that leads them to wander far away from the methodology of our predecessors. But I must stress an important point here: I am referring to those scholars who are trustworthy in their knowledge and in their practice of the Religion, because

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[87] Related by Al-Bukhārī (740), in the chapter, "Placing one's Right Hand Over one's Left Hand."

not all scholars are of this description. This is not to say that one should accept everything from one particular scholar, for even a trustworthy scholar is correct at times and mistaken at other times. Nonetheless, it is best for the youths to have a scholar who is an example for them, whereby students learns from him his methodology of deriving rulings from proofs.

The questioner referred to the paucity of scholars; it is true that the scholars are few in number, but – *alḥamdulillāh* – there are signs indicating that more and more scholars are developing here in Riyadh, in Qasīm, and in Hijāz, for there are many students that have now dedicated themselves to learning. But what is more important [than numbers] is that every young student be patient upon the path he has chosen, and instead of rushing matters, he should adhere to the company of those scholars who are trustworthy and knowledgeable.

The Impermissibility of Students Of Knowledge Villifying one Another

83) The way of some students of knowledge is to vilify other students, warning people to stay away from them – is this permissible?

Without a doubt, it is forbidden for scholars to vilify one another. We all know that it is forbidden to backbite a believing brother, even if he is not a scholar. Then how much graver is the offence of backbiting a believing brother who also happens to be a scholar!

It is compulsory upon the believer to hold his tongue, refraining from backbiting his believing brothers. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ
وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا۟ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن
يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

> O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allāh (ﷻ). Verily, Allāh (ﷻ) is the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful. (Qur'ān 49:12)

Those who vilify a scholar do well to remember this: their attacks on that scholar will provoke people to reject the truth he speaks, so those who attack a scholar are not attacking him as a person, but rather they are attacking the Prophet's legacy, for the scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets. When a scholar is rejected, people will consequently be led to reject the *Sharī'ah* of the Prophet (ﷺ).

I do not say that every scholar is infallible; on the contrary, every human being is liable to making mistakes. When you believe that a scholar has made a mistake, openly discuss the matter with him, and if you become convinced that the truth is with him, you must follow him; otherwise, you must reject his view, for in either scenario, it is forbidden for you to follow what you know to be wrong. In discussing an issue with a scholar, you must not speak to him in an insulting manner, especially when he is a scholar known for his sincerity. If possible, you can phrase your disagreement in an indirect manner by saying, for instance, "Some people say such and such (mention the view of the scholar you are speaking to), but it is a weak view." Then continue to explain why it is weak and why another view – the one you hold to be true – is stronger.

Had we wanted to vilify scholars for mistakes they made in issues that pertain to the Religion, we would have vilified some very eminent scholars. So what I mentioned above is the way we must all follow. Whenever you feel that a scholar has erred, discuss the matter with him, and if he becomes convinced of your arguments, he should follow you (and vice-versa); otherwise, the disagreement between you and him is a valid and acceptable disagreement; one that requires you to hold your tongue regarding his honour, so that he expresses his view, and you express your view.

People have not just begun to differ in religious matters; people have differed from the time of the Companions until this day. Nonetheless, if the truth becomes clear to someone but he persists in upholding his view, you must warn others about that mistaken view, but not with the intention of tarnishing that person's reputation or of exacting revenge from him, for he might hold correct opinions in issues other than the one regarding which you debated with him.

The important point to understand here is that I advise my brothers to stay away from this disease (i.e., of vilifying other students of knowledge). And I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to cure us all from everything that harms us in our religious and worldly affairs.

"I Ask Allāh to Help the Scholars when they become Subject to Attacks that Emanate from the Tongues of the Foolish ones"

84) Many among the youth habitually magnify the mistakes of scholars, blowing them totally out of proportion. How can we advise the youth regarding this problem?

I ask Allāh to help the scholars when they become subject to attacks that emanate from the tongues of the foolish ones.

We often hear at first about the falsehood that is ascribed to some very eminent scholars, but then, when we investigate the matter, we find that the opposite of what is claimed is true. It is often said, "Such and such person said such and such statement," but when we investigate the matter, we find out that that person never said what he is claimed to have said. This is a great transgression indeed!

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, lying upon me is not like lying upon anyone else,"[88]

or at least he (ﷺ) said what is equivalent to this in meaning. In a similar sense, lying upon the scholars in what is related to Allāh's *Sharī'ah* is not like lying upon all other people in worldly matters, because in the case of the scholar, a ruling of the *Sharī'ah* is being falsely ascribed to him.

The more people trust a scholar, the more often will some people concoct lies against him, and the more dangerous those lies will be. When talking to anyone from the masses, if you were to say, "Such and such person (mentioning someone whom he does not know or trust) said..." he would not accept what you say. But had you said, "Such and such person said..." quoting someone whom he trusts, he would readily accept what you say.

You will find that there is a kind of person who holds a view or an idea to be the truth, and although he wants people to accept his view, he can find no way to convince them. So what does he do? He invents a lie against a trustworthy scholar, saying, "He (the trustworthy scholar) says such and such." Lying in

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[88] A portion of a ḥadīth that Al-Bukhārī related (1291); Muslim (2154, 2155, 2156) also related it, from the ḥadīth of Al-Mughīrah Ibn Sho'bah (ﷺ).

such matters is especially dangerous because one is not attacking the scholar himself; his lie goes beyond the scholar, for he is lying about Allāh's *Sharī'ah.*

Second, as you said, to magnify the faults of others is wrong and is a form of transgression. A scholar, like any other human being, is sometimes right and sometimes wrong. When a scholar errs, we must get in touch with him and say, "Did you say such and such?" If he says, "Yes," and if we feel that he made a mistake, we should say to him, "Do you have any proof to support your view?" By entering into a discussion with him, the truth should become clear, and every just scholar who fears Allāh (ﷻ) will not only be willing to return to the truth, but he will also announce that he has changed his view – and doing so is compulsory upon him.

But if you magnify a scholar's mistake, pointing out the worst aspects of his view, then you will have wronged your Muslim brother, and your transgression extends beyond him to the *Sharī'ah*. By shaking people's confidence in a scholar, you place them in a problematic situation, for they will not know whom to trust. Should people be left in a state of confusion, without a guide to lead them to Allāh's *Sharī'ah*? Or should they instead betake themselves to an ignorant person, who will lead them away from the straight path, not knowing that that is what he is doing? Or should they betake themselves to an evil scholar, who purposefully blocks them from the way of Allāh (ﷻ)? [These are the evil consequences of shaking people's confidence in good, trustworthy scholars.]

It is not Permissible to Slander Righteous People

85) Many false accusations are leveled at those who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. Despite the many hardships they face in calling to the way of Allāh, people accuse them, for instance, of being rash in their methodology. It is certainly sad to see that it is their Muslim brothers who are vilifying them. Noble Shaykh, please advise those who attack the honour of righteous people that dedicate themselves to propagating the truth?

To attack the honour of righteous people is a serious offence, one that is graver in consequence than the act of attacking the honour of common people – and included among the righteous are those who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. When one attacks their honour, he, in effect, weakens their efforts of ordering to what is good and forbidding what is evil. It is feared that the person who is attacking their honour will be put to trial, whereby he will hate not just those who enjoin good and forbid evil but also the very act of enjoining

good and forbidding evil, and this poses a dangerous threat to that person's religion. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> That is because they hate that which Allāh (ﷻ) has sent down (this Qur'ān and Islāmic laws, etc.), so He has made their deeds fruitless. (Qur'ān 47:9)

It is compulsory to help those who enjoin good and forbid evil and to defend their honour, for they perform a tremendous duty, one that the Nation as a whole is responsible for.

That being said, I do not say that those who enjoin good and forbid evil are infallible; they err just as we err, but they face so many hardships that we ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make those hardships atone for their sins and raise them in ranking. And I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to help them in their calling.

Their good deeds surely outnumber the mistakes that some members of the agency make (the Shaykh is referring to the official agency of enjoining good and forbidding evil in Saudi Arabia). Some members of the agency might at times become overcome by so much zeal that they are not able to control their actions, and this occurred during the Prophet's time, when the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) wanted to scold a Bedouin who had urinated in the *Masjid*, and then the Prophet (ﷺ) silenced them and proceeded to educate the Bedouin in a wise manner.

It is true that a person might be possessed by a great deal of zeal whereby he cannot control his emotions, but we cannot use the example of such a person to attack all members of the agency or even to find fault with all of that person's actions. Instead, we should find an excuse for him; furthermore, we should communicate with him and point out to him the correct way of remedying problems.

9- Women and Inviting to the Way of Allāh

The Woman's Role in Rectifying the Members of Society

Verily, all praise is for Allāh; we praise Him, seek His help, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides none can lead astray, and whomsoever Allāh leads astray none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger. Allāh (ﷻ) sent him with guidance and the true Religion. He (ﷺ) conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, sincerely advised the Nation, and strove in the way of Allāh with a true *Jihād*. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations upon Muḥammad, his family, his companions, and all who truly follow him until the Last Day.

To begin[89], it pleases me to be here and to be given the opportunity to express my thoughts on this important topic: "The Role of a Woman in Bettering Society." I begin this talk by seeking help, guidance, and correctness from Allāh (ﷻ). A woman's role in bettering society is one of paramount importance; society's betterment is achieved on two fronts:

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[89] This section is based on a lecture delivered by the noble Shaykh, Muḥammad Ibn Sāleh Al-'Uthaymin (may Allāh have mercy on him). He delivered it in Jeddah, on Tuesday, the 23rd of Rabbi' Al-Awwal, 1412 H.

The Shaykh -- may Allāh have mercy on him – gave us permission to print it and circulate its copies, so that the benefit of the speech can reach a greater audience. May Allāh (ﷻ) reward him well for his services to Islām and Muslims; Indeed, Allāh is All-Hearing and answers supplications.

I did print this speech in a small pamphlet, but because of its importance, I am including it in this compilation. May Allāh bless this effort, making it beneficial, just as He (ﷻ) made the original speech beneficial. And all praise is for Allāh. (Written by Abū Anas).

1) External betterment, which takes place in the marketplace, in the *Masjid*, and other public places. Men contribute greatest on this front, simply because of their prominence in public life or otherwise put, life outside of the home.

2) Internal betterment, which takes place in people's homes. The responsibility of bettering one's home lies, for the most part, with women, because a woman is the caretaker of her home. Addressing His speech and commands to the Prophet's wives, Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَقَرْنَ
فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ ۖ وَأَقِمْنَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ إِنَّمَا
يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ
تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance, and perform *Al-Ṣalāt* (*Iqāmat-Aṣ-Ṣalāt*), and give *Zakāt* and obey Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) wishes only to remove *Al-Rijis* (evil deeds and sins, etc.) from you, O members of the family (of the prophet (ﷺ)), and to purify you with a thorough purification. (Qur'ān 33:33)

The Importance of a Woman's Role in Bettering Society

I think that I am not mistaken in saying that bettering the character of at least half of society's members is the responsibility of women. I say this for two reasons.

First, there are just as many, if not more, women as there are men. As is suggested in the Prophet's Sunnah, women represent the greater percentage of Ādam's progeny. This is an overall reality; nonetheless, it may differ from country to country and from era to era, for women might be outnumbered by men in a particular country or during a particular era. At any rate, since women represent such a large percentage of the overall population, they must obviously play an extremely important role in rectifying the condition of the society they live in.

Second, any new generation that grows up is first raised under the care of women, a fact that in and of itself shows the important role and obligation of women in terms of bettering the conditions of society.

Qualities Needed by a Woman in Order To Successfully Fulfil her Role

For a woman to carry out her duties in improving the conditions of society, she must have certain qualities and abilities. Here we will mention some of them.

1. The Uprightness of a Woman

A woman needs first and foremost to be righteous herself, so that she can be a good example for her daughters.

How can a woman become upright? Every woman must realize that only through knowledge can she become upright, and here I am referring to religious knowledge that she can learn from books – if that is possible for her – or from the tongues of scholars, regardless of whether those scholars are men or women.

In these times, it has become very easy for women to learn knowledge directly from the mouths of scholars through audio cassettes, for Islāmic audio cassettes - *alḥamdulillāh* - now represent an important means of enlightening and educating society. Hence, a woman needs knowledge to become upright, for there is no such thing as uprightness without knowledge.

2. Clarity and Eloquence in Speech

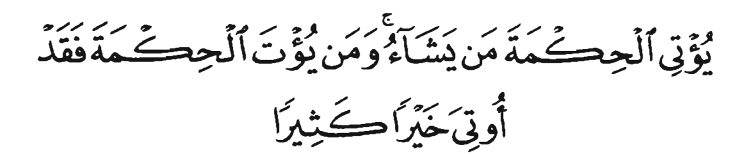
A woman should ask Allāh (ﷻ) to bless her with eloquence, so that she can clearly express her ideas and thoughts. Some people have within them deep thoughts and ideas, but they are unable to express them or they can only express them in unclear language; such people find it difficult to enlighten others simply because they cannot get across their message.

So now we ask, how does one develop the ability to speak eloquently, to find the right words to convey one's message? I call upon the Muslim woman to study all branches of knowledge related to the Arabic language – such as grammar, morphology, and rhetoric. Hence, in order for a woman to reach an adequate level of eloquence in speech, she should take classes in the aforesaid

sciences. And by improving her abilities to speak, she will better be able to convey Islām to other women.

3. Wisdom

As is the case for a man, a woman should be wise in how she goes about performing *da'wah* and in how she conveys knowledge to her audience. Wisdom is to put each thing in its right place, to give each matter its due weight, a definition that is mentioned by the people of knowledge. Wisdom is from Allāh's blessings upon His slaves. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



He grants *Ḥikmah* (wisdom) to whom He pleases, and he, to whom *Ḥikmah* is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. (Qur'ān 2:269)

Without wisdom, one's *da'wah* is deficient and one's goals become a distant reality. When a *dā'ī* calls to the way of Allāh, it is from wisdom to speak to each person in a way that is appropriate to him. The ignorant person, the knowledgeable person who is somewhat negligent and lazy, and the knowledgeable person who rejects the truth because of his pride – one should address each one of these three in a different manner, one that is suited to their particular situation.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (ؓ) to Yemen, he (ﷺ) said to him:

"Verily, you are going to people who are from the People of the Book."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said this so that Mu'ādh (ؓ) would know their situation and be prepared to address them accordingly.

There are many examples which show the Prophet's wisdom in performing *Da'wah*, from them:

1. Anas Ibn Mālik (ؓ) related that a bedouin entered the mosque and then began to urinate inside of it. Being overcome by zeal, the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) shouted at the man to make him stop. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> "Do not put a halt [to his urinating, but instead leave him].' When the Bedouin had finished urinating, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered for a bucketful of water to be poured over the affected area. He (ﷺ) then called the Bedouin and said to him, 'Filth, no matter how small it is, is not suitable for these *Masājid*; instead, they (i.e., *Masājid*) are only [appropriate] for the Prayer, for recitation of the Qur'ān, and for remembrance of Allāh,'

or this is near to what the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said. Imām Aḥmad – may Allāh have mercy on him – related that the bedouin then said, "O Allāh, have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and do not have mercy on anyone other than us."

We take from this story the following lessons:

1) The companions were filled with zeal, and so they shouted at the bedouin. From this we conclude that it is not permissible to approve of evil; instead, we must be quick to censure the doer of evil. But if hastiness on our part might lead to a greater harm, it becomes compulsory upon us to be deliberate and careful, and by doing so, to prevent the greater evil. For this very reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) silenced the Companions (ﷺ), forbidding them from taking any immediate action against the bedouin.

2) The Prophet (ﷺ) allowed an evil action to occur in order to prevent an even greater evil. He (ﷺ) allowed the Bedouin to continue urinating, and in doing so, the Prophet (ﷺ) prevented greater evil from occurring. Had the Companions immediately taken action to stop the Bedouin while he was urinating, one of the following results would have occurred:

   - The natural reaction of the Bedouin would have been to protect his clothes from becoming sullied. Thus (during the struggle) his urine would spray here and there, sullying a greater area of the *Masjid*; furthermore, his private parts would have become exposed. These are two evils that the Prophet (ﷺ) prevented.

   - If he had not reacted to their stopping him, the Bedouin's own garment – in addition to the floor of the *Masjid* - would have become sullied with urine.

   Because of these two possible evil results, the Prophet (ﷺ) allowed him to finish urinating; this evil was more acceptable than the two mentioned above because it was not preventable, for the bedouin

had already began to urinate. What we learn here, then, is that we sometimes have to accept the occurrence of a smaller evil if a greater one is prevented in the process. There is a source for this rule in Allāh's Book:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allāh (ﷻ), lest they insult Allāh (ﷻ) wrongfully without knowledge. (Qur'ān 6:108)

Each one of us knows that Allāh (ﷻ) loves for us to insult the false idols of the polytheists, but because insulting them leads to the insult of One who does not deserve insults – the Lord (Allāh (ﷻ)) – Allāh (ﷻ) forbade us from cursing them.

3) The Prophet (ﷺ) hastened to remove the filth, because delaying in this matter has its own evil consequences. The Prophet (ﷺ) could have waited to clean the area of the *Masjid* that was affected by urine; perhaps he could have waited until someone needed to pray there. But he (ﷺ) did not wait, and so we can conclude that, in general, it is best for one to hasten to remove any harm or evil, for one might later on forget or lose the ability to remove it. This does not apply to filth only; it applies to evil in general, for as I said, one can forget or lose the ability to remove an evil later on. For example, if some impurity falls on one's garment, the same garment that one prays in, it is best to wash off the impurity right away, without delaying. Otherwise, one might forget later on, or one might not be able to wash it later, because water is not available or because of some other reason.

   On another occasion, after being placed in the lap of the Prophet (ﷺ), a child urinated. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered for water to be brought, and he (ﷺ) immediately poured the water over the urine. And for the reasons we mentioned, he (ﷺ) did not delay washing his garment until the time of prayer.

4) The Prophet (ﷺ) explained the significance and purpose of *Masjids*, making it clear that they are built for specific purposes only – for

prayer, for recitation of the Qur'ān, and for the remembrance of Allāh (ﷻ). Therefore, filth or harmful matter is not suitable in *Masjids*. *Masjids*, then, must be honoured and purified: only deeds that please Allāh (ﷻ) should be performed in them, the deeds that are mentioned above and other deeds that are similar in their goodness.

5) When one advises someone with wisdom and gentleness, he will achieve much more than he would have achieved had he been harsh. So completely convinced was the bedouin by the words the Prophet (ﷺ) taught him, he said this famous statement: "O Allāh, have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and do not have mercy on anyone other than us." Because the man was clearly ignorant (and not an ill-intentioned man) – no man who is knowledgeable and aware of the sanctity of mosques would do what he did – the Prophet (ﷺ) was kind and gentle in advising him.

2. In a narration related by Al-Bukhārī, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I am destroyed." He (ﷺ) said:

"What has destroyed you?"

He said, "I occurred upon my wife (a softened way of saying, 'I engaged in sexual intercourse with my wife') during *Ramaḍān* while I was fasting." It is truly a great offence for a man to engage in sexual intercourse with his wife during *Ramaḍān*, when he knows – and has not forgotten – that he is fasting, but observe how the Prophet (ﷺ) dealt with him. Did he scold him? Or did he shout at him? No, because the man came not in a state of indifference for what he did, but rather he came, penitent and full of regret. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

"Is there a slave that you can liberate (to atone for your mistake)?"

He said, "No." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Are you able to fast two months consecutively?"

He said, "No." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Are you able to find [food] to feed sixty poor people?"

He said, "No." The man sat down in the state he was in, and soon after, a large basket filled with dates was brought to the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Take this and give it in charity (as an atonement for your transgression)."

The man said, "To one who is poorer than me, O Messenger of Allāh? For by Allāh, between its *Lābitai* – meaning *Hurratayn* – (this expression means in Madīnah, because *Lābitai* signifies land that is filled with black pebbles. And Madīnah is surrounded by such land) there are no people of any household that are poorer than the people of my household." The Prophet (ﷺ) laughed until his molars became visible. He (ﷺ) then said:

"Feed your family with it (i.e., with the dates)."

There are a number of lessons that we can infer from this story. Foremost among them is the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) was neither harsh nor reproachful, because the man came of his own accord, penitent and contrite. We must distinguish between a proud man and a Muslim man who comes to us, asking us to help save him from a mistake he made. Because the Companion (ﷺ) in this story was of the latter kind, the Prophet (ﷺ) was kind to him, sending him back not just feeling good about himself, but also with provision – the dates – in his hands, which he should have fed to the poor had he not been poor himself.

3. Mu'āwiyah Ibn Al-Ḥakam Al-Sullami (ﷺ) related that, while he was praying with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), a man from the people sneezed, and so Mu'āwiyah (ﷺ) said, "May Allāh have mercy on you (*Yarhamukallah*)." The people cast their gazes at Mu'āwiyah (ﷺ), and he said, "Oh, the loss of my mother (an expression indicating extreme grief)! What is the matter with you that you look at me?" They began to strike their hands on their legs, trying to silence him, and so he stopped talking. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) completed the prayer, called Mu'āwiyah (ﷺ), and said:

"Verily, anything from the speech of people is not appropriate for this prayer; rather, it (the prayer) is only *Al-Takbīr* (magnifying Allāh, by saying, '*Allāhu-Akbar*,' Allāh is the Greatest) and the recitation of the Qur'ān."

Mu'āwiyah (ﷺ) said, "May my mother and father be ransom for him, for I have not seen an instructor who is better in teaching than him. For by Allāh, he did not scold me or frown at me; he did not strike me; and he did not curse me."

4. This example is taken from the story of a man who wore a gold ring after the Prophet (ﷺ) had clarified that wearing gold is *Ḥarām* for the males of the Muslim Nation. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Does one of you betake himself to an ember of Fire and then place it on his hand."

The Prophet (ﷺ) then removed the ring himself and threw it [down]. When the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) left, it was said to the man, "Take your ring and use it for some benefit (other than wearing it)." He said, "No, by Allāh, I will never take it, [after] the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has thrown it [down]."

In contrast to the previous examples, we can discern a degree of severity in how the Prophet (ﷺ) dealt with the man, but it appears that this was because the news of gold being *Ḥarām* for men had already reached the man.

Therefore, we can conclude that the *dā'ī* should treat each person according to his circumstances, for some people are ignorant, others know but are lazy, and yet others know but are proud and haughty. The *dā'ī* must treat people from each of these different categories in that manner which is most suitable to their situation.

4. Sound training of Children

A woman should train her children properly, for her children represent the men and women of the future. In the earliest stages of their development, it is mothers that human beings learn from. If she is a good mother, good in her manners and dealings and good in the way she brings up her children, then those children will take after her and contribute positively to the betterment of society.

Every mother, then, must dedicate herself to training her children, and if she cannot undertake their training on her own, then their father or another guardian – for example, a brother or uncle, if their father is dead – should help her to raise them.

A woman should not yield to difficult circumstances, feeling that she cannot change her situation or her family's situation for the better. A bad situation needs to be changed and a good situation needs to be improved. When the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent to a Nation whose people worshipped idols, severed the ties of relations, and wronged one another, he (ﷺ) did not submit to their situation; in fact, Allāh (ﷻ) did not permit him to give up and yield to the prevailing conditions. Allāh (ﷻ) said to him:

فَٱصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

Therefore proclaim openly (Allāh's Message-Islāmic Monotheism) that which you are commanded, and turn away from *Al-Mushrikūn* (polytheists, idolaters and disbelievers). (Qur'ān 15:94)

Allāh (ﷻ) ordered the Prophet (ﷺ) to openly proclaim the truth, to turn away from the polytheists, not to allow their *Shirk* (associating partners with Allāh in worship) and their transgression to weaken his resolve.

On the other hand, one might be correct in saying that though it is from wisdom to change the evil around us, we cannot remove evil as quickly as we want to remove it. If society is far away from the truth and from uprightness in their affairs, we must invite them in stages, starting with what is most important and most urgent. Then we should continue gradually until we fully realize our goals.

5. *Liveliness in Performing Da'wah*

Whether it is through a university, school, or any other institution, women are needed to educate young females. Women also have an important role to play in society at a personal level – women visiting one another in their homes and encouraging one another to do good deeds.

Alḥamdulillāh, we know that today many women are in fact playing such roles by teaching young females sciences related to Islām and the Arabic language. A woman who educates the young daughters of this Nation will continue to gain rewards even after she dies, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "When a person dies, his deeds are cut off except for three: perpetual charity, knowledge that is benefited by, or a righteous child who supplicates for him."

When a woman is active in spreading the teachings of Islām – through universities, schools, or mutual visitations – she realizes her most important role in helping to better the conditions of society.

This is what comes to my mind now with regard to the subject, '*a woman's role in bettering society*.' I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make us from those who are guided and who guide others; who are righteous and who help bring others towards righteousness. And I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to grant us mercy, for He is Oft-Forgiving.

All praise is for Allāh, Lord of all that exists. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations on Muḥammad, his family, his companions, and all those who follow him in righteousness until the Last Day.

Rulings are Applicable to both Men and Women unless Stated otherwise

86) Is Da'wah compulsory upon women? If so, how should a woman go about performing Da'wah?

We must understand this rule: Unless proven to the contrary, a ruling that is established for men is also established for women. In some instances, there is proof to show that a ruling applies only to men. For example, 'Ā'ishah (ﷺ) said, "O Messenger of Allāh, is there *Jihād* [that is compulsory] upon women?" He (ﷺ) said:

> "Upon them is a *Jihād* in which there is no combat: *Al-Ḥajj* and 'Umrah (the two pilgrimages)."[90]

This ḥadīth proves that performing *Jihād* against enemies is compulsory upon men and not upon women. In another ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The best of rows for men (during Prayer) is the first one and the worst of them is the last one; the best of rows for women is the last one, and the worst of them is the first one."[91]

Sometimes, there is proof to show that a ruling is specific to women. For example, it is only permissible for women to wear gold and silk.[92]

The general principle, however, is that all commands and prohibitions for men also apply to women and vice-versa. If one falsely accuses a man of fornication, his punishment is to be flogged eighty times, even though the verse that establishes this ruling is for those who accuse chaste women:

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[90] Related by Al-Bukhārī (2875, 2876) with a different wording, in the chapter, "The *Jihād* Of Women."

[91] Related by Muslim (440) in the chapter, "Evening out and Establishing the Rows...," from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ).

[92] This ruling is established by the ḥadīth of Abū Mūsa Al-Ash'ari (ﷺ); in it, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "It is forbidden for the men of my Nation to wear silk, and it (wearing silk) is permissible for the women [of my Nation]." Al-Tirmidhī related it (1720) and said, "This ḥadīth is *Ḥasan Ṣaḥiḥ*." And he said, "The same topic is related from 'Umar (ﷺ), Ali (ﷺ), 'Uqbah Ibn 'Āmir (ﷺ), Anas (ﷺ), Ḥudhayfah (ﷺ), Umm Hānai (ﷺ), and others. Also refer to Al-Nisā'ī (5159, 5160, 5161, and 5162), Abū Dawūd (4057), and Ibn Mājah (3595).

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا۟ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ فَٱجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَٰنِينَ جَلْدَةً

And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes. (Qur'ān 24:4)

Now we move on to the issue in question: is *da'wah* a duty that is specific to men or is it a general duty; one that is comprehensive of both men and women? It becomes clear from Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger that both men and women must perform *da'wah*; however, the sphere in which a woman works to perform *da'wah* is different from the sphere in which a man works to perform *da'wah*. A woman invites to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) in female gatherings and not in male gatherings. She can perform *da'wah* to women, for instance, in schools or in Mosques.

We must Look at the Overall Good

87) My husband ordered me to finish my studies, so that I can become a caller among women. I, on the other hand, prefer to dedicate myself to my home and my children, and so I want to quit my studies. Which is the wise course to take – to obey my husband or to quit my studies?

In my view, you should weigh out the options, looking for the greater good. Does the situation of your home require you to stay in it, which is the case, for instance, when one has many young children who require care and attention? If you are needed at home, then it is better for you to remain there instead of going out to school. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Begin with yourself, then move on to those you are responsible for."[93]

[93] Al-Suyūti mentioned it in Al-Durar Al-Muntashirah with the wording, "Begin with yourself and then move on to those that are next to you." It is related in Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim (997), in the chapter, "Spending First on one's Own Self and then..." The wording of the narration in Muslim is as follows: "Begin with your own self: Spend on it, and if anything extra remains, on your family...," from the haddeth of Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh (رضي الله عنه).

You, and no one else, are charged with the obligatory duty of raising your children and taking care of your home. On the other hand, performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is a societal obligation, so there might be enough women working in the field of *da'wah*. Nonetheless, if you can combine both – raising your children and calling to the way of Allāh (ﷻ), even if you can only do so outside of a school environment – then that is commendable.

As we are discussing the importance of a woman raising her own children and taking care of her home, I want to take the opportunity to warn my brothers not to import female house servants, regardless of whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. There are many harmful effects of importing female servants (this problem is prevalent in certain wealthy countries; servants, in large numbers, are imported from poorer Asian countries):

1) Many of the female servants come from their countries, travelling without a *Maḥram* (a *Maḥram* is any man that a woman is allowed to be in seclusion with – for instance, her husband, brother, father, etc.). And it is forbidden for a woman to travel without a *Maḥram*, a ruling that is established in Al-Bukhārī and Muslim, from the ḥadīth of Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه); in it, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

   > "A woman must not travel unless she is accompanied by a *Maḥram*."[94]

2) A female servant comes to know the secrets of one's home, and we cannot rule out the possibility that from the many female servants that are imported, some are hired to find out about and report the affairs of Muslims.

3) Our own women become accustomed to comfort and laziness, and this will come to harm women, perhaps even in their thinking. When a woman sits in her home with no work to do, her mind is likely to become dull.

4) Some of the female servants that are imported are young and beautiful, so by welcoming them in one's home, one opens the doors of temptation and trial; temptation either for the man himself or for his children. We have heard many reports of the evil that results in this regard.

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[94] A portion of a ḥadīth that is related by Al-Bukhārī (1862), in the chapter, "The Ḥajj of Women." Muslim (1341) also related it, in the chapter, "A Women's Journey with a *Maḥram*, to Ḥajj or Elsewhere." Similar narrations are related by Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), Abū Sa'īd Al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه), and Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه).

5) Many female servants come before the men of the house ill dressed – with faces, arms, and legs exposed, and all of this is *Ḥarām* (forbidden).

Because of these harmful results, we should advise others to completely refrain from importing female servants. And even when there is necessity to import them, certain conditions must be fulfilled:

1) A *Maḥram* must accompany the female servant.

2) Circumstances must be such that no temptation or trial is feared.

3) There is a real need to bring a female servant into one's home.

How should a Woman go about Performing *Da'wah* to other Women

88) How should a woman go about inviting other women to apply the teachings of Islām? And for this purpose, is it better for women to gather in one another's homes or in the Masjid?

In my view, just as it is possible for men to perform *da'wah*, it is also possible for women to perform it, but because women cannot go outside of their homes to the same degree that men can, they are not equal to men in every aspect. Nonetheless, schools or universities can represent a possible environment for *da'wah* to be performed among women.

As for women gathering in a home for the purpose of increasing knowledge, I hesitate to issue a ruling, for when I weigh the benefits of such gatherings with the harm that is feared, I say that it is better for a woman to stay in her home, where she should study and read as much as she can. If the women who want to gather together live close to one another, being neighbours, for instance, then for them to get together is an easy matter. In regards to a woman who has to travel by car and go to a far-off place in order to get to another woman's home, I desist from issuing a ruling, and I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to guide me to the right view in this matter.

10- An Islāmic Awakening and the Various Islāmic Groups And Factions of Today The Meaning of "Islāmic Awakening"

89) Because of the Prophet's ḥadīth: "There will continue to remain a group from my Nation that is upright (and victorious) upon the truth," some people are loath to use the expression Islāmic Awakening, feeling that its meaning contradicts that of the said ḥadīth. What answer would you give to their claim?

The meaning of the expression *Islāmic Awakening* is not in conflict with the said ḥadīth, because the Prophet (ﷺ) did not say, "My Nation will continue to remain upon the truth"; instead, he (ﷺ) said, "A group from my Nation." This means that there are other groups that are not upon the truth, so people use the expression "awakening" in reference to the state of people in general before and after an overall 'awakening" in the Nation. Again, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "There will continue to remain a group from my Nation,"[95] and he (ﷺ) did not say, "My Nation will continue," and there is a clear distinction between the two statements. At the same point in time, people might be strong in the application of Islām in one country and weak in another, so that an "awakening" is needed among the people of the latter country.

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[95] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (7311), in the chapter, "The Saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'There will Continue..." Muslim (1920) also related it, in the chapter, "The Saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), "There will Continue to Remain a Group...," from the ḥadīth of Al-Mughīrah Ibn Shu'bah (ؓ). Similar narrations are related from Thaubān (ؓ), Samarah (ؓ), Jābir (ؓ), Mu'āwiyah (ؓ), 'Uqbah Ibn 'Āmir (ؓ), Sa'ad Ibn Abī Waqqās (ؓ); all of these narrations are related by Muslim.

We must Devote Ourselves to Strengthening the Foundations of the Present-Day Islāmic Awakening

90) Is the increase in Islāmic awareness today, as some people imagine, a passing reaction to corruption in society and remoteness from Islam's teachings, or does it have solid foundations, so that Insha-Allāh, it will bear its fruits?

It appears to me that the present-day awakening has been brought about by two causes:

1) A desire to return to the truth; and one finds this desire to be most common among thinkers or the more intelligent members of society. When an intelligent person looks at the situation of people around the world today, both in Muslim and non-Muslim countries, in terms of moral decadence and chaos in societies and anxiety among individuals, he comes to realize that the only solution to the world's problems is adherence to Allāh's *Sharī'ah*. It is a *Sharī'ah* that Allāh (ﷻ) revealed as a light for the creation, so that they can see the way that they must follow in life and consequently become guided in their knowledge and actions. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

   يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ
   قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

   O mankind! Verily, there has come to you a convincing proof (Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)) from your Lord, and We sent down to you a manifest light (this Qur'ān). (Qur'ān 4:174)

   One who has a strong link with Allāh (ﷻ) finds comfort and peace and tranquility in his heart, all of which are not found by one who turns away from Islām.

   مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
   أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً

   Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islāmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life. (Qur'an 16:97)

Many sincere and intelligent Muslims have come to the realization that if people continue upon the course of corrupt beliefs and moral decadence, mankind will be led to its destruction. They have realized that man needs a source and guide, and so they returned to the teachings of Islām, and from such people much good is hoped for, because they returned to the truth, becoming convinced of it through knowledge and study.

2) The second cause of the present-day Islāmic awakening is imitation: When, for example, a young man sees his brother, cousin, or friend upon the correct path, he will imitate him. Since he is only imitating or conforming to the way of someone he admires and respects, his footing is not strong, and the *Shayṭān* (Devil) might entice and snare him, leading him away from the true path. On the other hand, his imitation of another person might awaken his desire to learn and understand, so that he himself becomes convinced of the truth and thereafter continues to remain upright.

These, in my view, are the causes of the Islāmic awakening of today. To keep it on course, we need to devote our efforts to solidifying its foundations, to guide Muslims to both knowledge and action. It is true that many Muslims have increased some aspects of their knowledge, yet they are lacking in other aspects – such as methodology and manners in dealing with others. For example, one becomes so zealous in his love for Allāh's Religion that he tries to guide others based not on dealing with each person according to his situation but on his zeal alone. But the wise course he should follow is the one that the *Sharī' ah* prescribed.

When Allāh (ﷻ) sent Muḥammad (ﷺ) to the creation, He (ﷻ) did not send with him the complete *Sharī' ah* over the course of one week, one month, or even one year. On the contrary, the Messenger (ﷺ) remained in Makkah for thirteen years, and up until that point, only two of the five pillars of Islām had been prescribed: the two testimonies of faith and prayer, though there is a difference of opinion regarding *Zakāt*, in terms of when it became prescribed. And even when fasting was first prescribed, people were given a choice between fasting and feeding a poor person. Only later on did fasting become prescribed without one being given an alternative choice. Then the last pillar of Islām, *Ḥajj*, was prescribed only after Makkah became conquered, when people no longer feared entering it.

From this gradual process of Allāh (ﷻ) revealing the *Sharī' ah* to the Prophet (ﷺ), we should realize that today, just as during the Prophet's lifetime, people cannot be changed overnight. With this understanding, we should advise people to accept and apply the truth, inviting them with wisdom and fair preaching,

with patience and deliberation, not expecting them to become upright in a single day. Whoever wants people to become upright in a single day has questioned Allāh's wisdom and has opposed His *Sharī'ah*. Therefore one should have reasonable expectations from people, all the while working diligently to help them mend their ways.

There is Nothing in the Qur'ān or Sunnah which Indicates that it is Permissible for there to Exist Many Groups and Factions

91) Are there texts in the Qur'ān and Sunnah which indicate that it is permissible for many Islāmic groups and factions to exist at the same time?

There is no proof, neither in the Qur'ān nor in the Sunnah, which indicates that it is permissible for many Islāmic groups and factions to exist at the same time; rather, texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah indicate the opposite – the blameworthiness of those who divide into groups:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ
مِنْهُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ

Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allāh (ﷻ), Who then will tell them what they used to do. (Qur'ān 6: 159)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

Each sect rejoicing in that which is with it. (Qur'ān 30:32)

To be sure, the existence of many groups as opposed to one group is contrary to what Allāh (ﷻ) commanded in His saying:

وَإِنَّ هَـٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿٥٢﴾

And verily! This religion (of Islāmic Monotheism) is one religion, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me. (Qur'ān 23:52)

When people split up into factions, the members of each faction vilify and curse those who belong to the other factions, or even worse happens, which is why I hold that it is wrong to start up a group. Some say that it is not possible for *da'wah* to strengthen and spread unless it is formed under the support of a group. I say that this is not so, for *da'wah* strengthens and spreads to the degree that one adheres to Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah; and to the degree that one follows the way of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his rightly-guided *Khalīfahs* (ﷺ).

The Number of Groups out there is a Sign of Sickness

92) Is it a sign of sickness or of health that there are so many Islāmic groups out there?

The existence of many groups as opposed to one group is a sign of sickness and not of good health. I maintain that the Muslim Nation should be one group that adheres to Allāh's Book and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger, and by this, I do not mean that we should force people to unite upon one opinion in every single issue, because doing so is not possible. Differences of opinion existed during the era of the Companions (ﷺ) and even during the lifetime of the Messenger (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) once said to a group of his Companions:

"Let no one from you pray *'Aṣr* except in Bani Quraydha."

On their way to Bani Quraydha, the time for *'Aṣr* entered and was coming to an end. Those among the group differed in their understanding of the Prophet's command: Some understood from his command that they should pray *'Aṣr* only when they arrive at their destination, even if that meant praying outside of its time. Others among them felt that they should pray *'Aṣr* on time, even if they had not yet arrived at Banī Quraydha. News of what happened reached the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and he did not censure anyone from them for his understanding.

For our purposes here, it is important to understand that it is fine for differences of opinion to exist, but it is differences in direction that we fear. Differences of direction result when each person believes that his methodology is different from that of his brother, and so he speaks out against his brother, cursing him, and perhaps even considering him to be outside the fold of Islām. This is what we fear, and this is what is going on today among certain people; people that are so prejudiced in their views that they curse or verbally attack anyone who holds a view that they do not hold. And without a doubt, this is contrary to the way of the believers. The believers are united brothers, even though they may differ in their opinions. In fact, I hold that differences of

opinion that are based on proof – when each person bases his view on what he feels to be the strongest proof – do not really represent any disagreement, for at the root of the matter is each person's sincere desire to apply the strongest proof. In reality they are in agreement, differing only in their understanding of different proofs, and differences in understanding inherently exist among the children of Ādam, but such differences of opinion should not lead to differences in the hearts of those who disagree.

It is not Permissible for a Muslim to Attack the Honour of his Brothers

93) Please advise us concerning those who delve into issues that pertain to the various [Islāmic] groups.

You asked me to advise those who delve into the issue of the various [Islāmic] groups, but I feel it appropriate to address my Muslim brothers in general, advising them not to occupy themselves in cursing, vilifying, or attacking the honour of their Muslim brothers – for example, by calling them innovators or evil-doers. All of this leads to division in the Muslim Nation.

وَلَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

> And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment. (Qur'ān 3:105)

I advise my brothers to be sincere, gentle, and kind when dealing with one another, and if one feels the need to advise his brother, doing so secretly is better than doing so in the presence of others. On the other hand, by erecting barriers, behind which some curse others, we end up inflicting a great deal of harm upon our own selves.

What should a Muslim's Stance be Vis-à-vis the Different [Muslim] Groups?

94) There is much talk nowadays about the different Islāmic groups that call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) – groups such as the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh, the Ikhwān, and the Salafīs. Which of these groups should we follow? And what should a Muslim's stance be with regard to the different groups that exist today?

The stand I take on this issue is that I describe it to be painful and saddening, and I fear that, as a direct consequence of division among Muslims, the Islāmic awakening we are witnessing today will weaken and fail. When people divide, their situation becomes as Allāh (ﷻ) described it to be:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡ

> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

It is made clear in this verse that whenever people dispute with one another and become divided, they will fail and lose their strength, becoming insignificant. All enemies of Islām, both those who display their enmity outwardly and those who hide their enmity within themselves, rejoice over our division, and if they can, they add flame to the fire. They will go to one person, whispering lies about another person in his ears, sowing dissension among Muslim brothers who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

We must stand united and together defend ourselves from the plots of those who show enmity to Allāh, to His Messenger, and to His Religion. We must be one Nation in the truest sense, gathering together and benefiting from one another. In our unity, we must become as one caller. To accomplish these goals, the leaders of each country, those who have an influence over others, must get together, study the situation, and unite upon a plan that can accommodate everyone, even if they still differ in the way they perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh. What is important is that we be brothers, mutually loving one another and uniting together upon the truth.

The questioner asked, "Which group is the best one?" Were I to say that such and such group is the best one, I would, in effect, have acknowledged and endorsed the division, and I do neither; rather, I believe that we should become like one hand. We must look at our situation truthfully and sincerely – sincerely to Allāh (ﷻ), to His Book, to His Messenger, to the *Imāms* of the Muslims, and the common Muslims. The truth – *alḥamdulillāh*, all praise is for Allāh – is clear,

remaining hidden to only one of two men: a man who turns away or a man who is haughty. As for one who turns towards the truth, sincerely wanting to submit to it, then without a doubt, he will be guided to it.

There should only be One Group

95) In recent times there has appeared a number of Islāmic groups in Muslim countries; groups such as the Ikhwān Al-Muslimīn, the Salafiyyīn, the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh, and others. Each group criticizes and finds fault with the other groups, and some members of one group might even proclaim that those of another group are disbelievers. Please explain to us your view regarding the different groups.

It is very sad to see Muslims becoming divided, with each person or group headed in a different direction. The Muslim Nation must truly be one Nation, for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً

> And verily! This religion (of Islāmic Monotheism) is one religion. (Qur'ān 23:52)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ
مِنْهُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ

> Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kind of religious sects), you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allāh (ﷻ), Who then will tell them what they used to do. (Qur'ān 6:159)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

۞ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ
وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ

He (Allāh (ﷻ)) has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūh, and that which We have inspired in you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), and that which We ordained for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and ʿĪsa, saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). (Qur'ān 42:13)

Therefore the Islāmic principle in this issue is that the Muslim Nation must unite upon Allāh's Religion. Division which leads to some proclaiming that others are evildoers, innovators, or disbelievers, is *Ḥarām* (forbidden).

Every person is prone to error:

"Everyone from the children of Ādam errs frequently, and the best of those who err frequently are those who repent,"[96]

meaning, those who repent from their mistakes. Instead of cursing members of a group for their mistakes or warning others about them, we should get together with them, point out their error to them, and try to arrive at a point of agreement.

The different groups that the questioner mentioned should in reality become one group, together following Allāh's Book and the Messenger's Sunnah. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"The example of a believer in relation to another believer is that of a building: parts of it strengthen its other parts."

One who is complete helps the one who is lacking, and the latter should thank the former for pointing out his shortcomings to him.

It is clearly against the teachings of Islām for Muslims to curse one another or accuse one another of being evildoers; in fact, Islām declares war on every matter that causes division. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Do no hate one another; do no plot against one another or show enmity towards one another; do not *Tanājashū* (raise prices of a product in order to deceive others); and do not enter into the buying transactions of others (i.e., if person A is inclined to sell a product to person B, being satisfied with the price offered, do not then thrust yourself between them, offering a higher price). Be Allāh's slaves, as brothers unto one another. The Muslim is the brother of another Muslim..."[97]

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[96] Related by Al-Tirmidhi (2499); Ibn Mājah (4251); Aḥmad, in his *Musnad* (3/198); and Al-Dārimi (2727). In *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Jamiʿ*, Al-Albāni ruled that it is *Ḥasan*. It is narrated by Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه).

[97] Related by Muslim (2564), in the chapter, "It is Forbidden to Forsake or Wrong another Muslim..." from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

The different Muslims groups must get together and point out each other's mistakes, openly discussing the issues that divide them. Through such a process, perhaps we can truly become one Nation, loving one another, showing mercy to one another, and helping to rectify one another's shortcomings. And it is Allāh (ﷻ) who grants success.

This Nation should not become Divided with This Person being *Ikhwānī*, another Person being *Tablīghī*, and yet another Person being *Salafī*

96) Does one do right when he affiliates himself to the Ikhwān group or to the Tablīgh group?

In my view, he does wrong: the Muslim Nation should not become divided, with one person being *Ikhwānī*, another being *Tablīghī*, and yet another being *Salafī*. All of us should want to be one Nation, under one banner; the banner of Islām, which the Prophet (ﷺ) came with. Each person must apply the teachings of Islām according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

> And We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember, then is there any that will remember (or receive admonition)? (Qur'ān 54: 17)

The Different Factions should not Exist, for there should be One Faction and One Undivided Nation

97) What should our policy be concerning those who invite others to affiliate themselves to the Ikhwān organization or to the Jamā'at Tablīgh? Their argument is that, by joining such groups, people will increase in their brotherhood and mutual love for the sake of Allāh (ﷻ).

If one invites others to these two groups because he wants for people to increase in their brotherhood and mutual love for the sake of Allāh (ﷻ), then his intention is correct. When I say that his intention is correct, I mean that it is

commendable for him to want Muslims to truly become brothers, who love one another for Allāh (ﷻ). Nonetheless, it is not correct for him to invite others to affiliate themselves to a particular group; the two groups – and all other groups for that matter – should unite, becoming one group, so that we do not remain divided.

It is not Permissible for One to Make Two *Bai'ās* (Pledges of Allegiance)

98) Is it permissible for one to make two Bai'ās, one for the leader who is in a position of authority and one for the leader of a [political or religious] party or group?

It is not permissible for one to make two *Bai'ās*, one for the overall leader in a given country and one for the leader of a party or group, to which one is affiliated. The Prophet (ﷺ) did say:

> "When three people go out on a journey, let them make one of them be their *Amīr* (leader),"[98]

but this does not mean that they give him *Bai'ah*. This ḥadīth simply means that a group should have one person who's saying is final, so that no differences arise. Among other proofs, this ḥadīth indicates that we should block off the door of differences in any way we can.

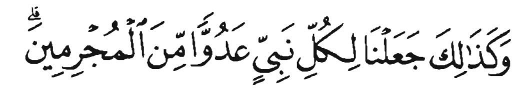
Every Islāmic Movement has Enemies that are Opposed to it

99) Some Islāmic groups outside of this country have been the subject of a ruthless attack on the part of certain writers and journalists. What advice can you give to those who speak negatively about Islāmic groups, with the intention of disparaging them?

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[98] Related by Abū Dāwūd (2608 and 2609) from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ). Al-Arnā'ūṭ said, "Its chain is *Ḥasan*." Refer to *Sharḥ al-Sunnah* (7/11).

For every Islāmic movement, there rises a group that is opposed to it, not wanting the truth, and of course it is not possible for us to impose silence on everyone. Allāh (ﷻ) says in His Book:



Thus have We made for every Prophet an enemy among the *Mujrimūn* (disbelievers, polytheists, criminals, etc.) (Qur'ān 25:31)

Here is a poignant example: Before the first revelation, the Prophet (ﷺ) was a paragon of trustworthiness and truthfulness among the Quraysh, but when Allāh (ﷻ) revealed the message of Islām to him, they called him a liar, a crazy man, a poet. In short, they accused him of the basest of faults.

Because it is inevitable for every Islāmic movement to have its enemies, I cannot say that we can eradicate the problem altogether. But I do say that those who are upon the truth should defend themselves as much as they are able to, being patient and hoping for their reward from Allāh (ﷻ). And I hope that their situation improves and that they become stronger.

The Unacceptable Actions of some Lead to Attacks from the Outside

100) These days, we find that those who are secular-minded in the media have embarked upon a vicious war against this Religion, and more in particular, against the youth of the present-day Islāmic awakening. They are given the opportunity to attack because some among the youth, a very small percentage of them, hold extreme views, but as I said, they represent a tiny minority of the youth who are active Muslims. Some in the media, however, generalize, leveling blame and criticism at all of the youth who are part of today's Islāmic awakening. What is your view regarding this issue?

Although what the people of evil do in this regard is wrong, it is what we should expect from them, for they take advantage of any mistake that is committed on the part of one who is a part of any Islāmic movement. Concerning the situation you mentioned, had everyone followed a just and moderate course, the movement would have been saved from such situations, but the unacceptable actions of some who think themselves to be part of the present Islāmic awakening is what has allowed some evildoers to take advantage of the situation.

I have heard that the Interior Minister spoke about this very matter, but then qualified his statement, saying that the wrong perpetrated by a few does not reflect poorly on most of the youth. And this is good. But ill-intentioned people are not just; they do not limit the fault of any wrong to the wrongdoer himself, but rather they generalize, pointing their blame at everyone. One who reads newspapers knows exactly what I am referring to. One will find that some journalists do not limit their blame to certain youth who do wrong; instead, they attack the very foundations of our society and our Religion. And this is something that we must avoid. Those whom Allāh (ﷻ) has endowed with authority should prevent such evil people from realizing their goals. We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to protect these lands from evil and trials and to protect us all from slipping into error.

Although they are Righteous in Appearance, some who Invite to the Way of Allāh (ﷻ) Follow Ways that Are Contrary to the Way of the Prophet (ﷺ)

101) In the Islāmic world there is a group that is called, "Jamā'atud-Da'wah Wal-Tablīgh (The Tablīghī Jamā'at)." The followers of this group are indoctrinated in stages; in gradual steps, they are made to follow a way of Tasuwwuf (Sufi practices) and, ultimately, of giving Bai'ah (pledge of allegiance) to its leader. They also innovate in the way they read invocations. What should the policy of a student of knowledge be in dealing with the members of this group?

As long as the group is outwardly good in its uprightness and its performance of *da'wah*, the student of knowledge should welcome it, but at the same time he must correct any deviance or mistake that it calls to. One such example is pledging allegiance (giving *Bai'ah*) to the leader of the group instead of to the overall leader [of the country]. If they choose a leader among them whenever they go on a journey or trip, then that is from the *Sharī'ah* (because taking a leader is different from pledging overall allegiance), for the Messenger (ﷺ) ordered those who go on a journey – if they are a group of at least three – to appoint one of them as leader over the rest. Whenever a group of people is together, they need to have a leader who has authority and the final say in matters, or else chaos will result.

Here, we must make an important distinction between the leader of a group during a journey, for example, and the overall leader of Muslims. As for the latter, Allāh (ﷻ) made it obligatory upon us to obey him (at all times and not just while we are together on a journey, as opposed to the leader of a travelling

party) and support him upon the truth. With this distinction in mind, it is not permissible to pledge allegiance to anyone other than that overall leader.

Without a doubt, among those who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) there are some who seem good when seen from the outside but who follow ways that are contrary to what the Prophet (ﷺ) came with. In dealing with such people, we should enter into their company and observe what they do. If we find out that they are upon falsehood, we should point out their mistakes. Then if they return to the truth, we will have achieved what we had set out to achieve. But if they persist in following their evil ways, we must not only stay away from them, but we must also warn people about the misguidance they are upon, so that people do not become deceived by their outward appearances.

The *Tablīghī Jamā'at* does have a Positive Effect in Improving some People

102) I am a part of the Tablīghī Jamā'at in this country, but I have heard that this group commits certain mistakes. Please advise me. Should I continue to remain with them or should I leave them?

In truth, the *Jamā'at Tablīgh* has a strong influence in rectifying the condition of people, for there are many disbelievers who have come to believe and many evildoers who have become upright because of the *da'wah* efforts of this group. The members of this group are known for their good manners, kind speech, smiling faces, and other such good qualities, for which they should be commended. But there are two points that work to discredit them:

1) Many of them lack knowledge. You will find that one of them dedicates himself to a single book from the books of the scholars, and although we hold that book in high esteem, encouraging people to read it – it is *Riyādh Al-Sālihīn* – we must point out that they only read that single book, as if there were no other beneficial book in the world. I do not depict all of them as being of this description, but still, I am referring to the majority among them. They need to have knowledgeable people among them to teach them, so that they can reach the level of being upon sure knowledge.

2) They leave this country, traveling to lands where the leaders of their group reside, and we have heard that those leaders follow many deviant practices. And so they are in need of someone who clarifies for them their misguidance. It is not scattered reports that have

come to us, but over and over again many people have reported to us that the leaders of this group follow many deviant practices.

In general, through their manners and efforts, the group's members have a positive effect on others, for which they should be commended.

There remains one issue that pertains to the members of this group: they think that revealed texts that mention the virtues of performing *Jihād* in the way of Allāh (ﷻ) apply to them. This is not a correct understanding, for such verses and *aḥādīth* refer to performing *Jihād* with the disbelievers, and not to going out to perform *da'wah* in the way of Allāh (ﷻ). It is true that going out to perform *da'wah* falls under the general meaning of going out in the way of Allāh (ﷻ), but the "way of Allāh" has two meanings, one that is general and one that is specific. Those verses that mention the virtues of martyrs, of the sword, and of spending for the cause of *Jihād* refer to that *Jihād* which involves fighting the enemies of Islām.

Criticism of the *Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh*

103) There is much and widespread criticism of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh, despite the plain fact that it is a group that has a very prominent role in Da'wah efforts. Instead of warning against this group, please advise its members, so that they can learn to perform Da'wah in the correct manner.

There is much talk nowadays about the different groups and about which among them is best; much of that talk centers on the *Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh*. In my view, it is a group that has much goodness to it, and from among the different groups I know of, it has the most profound influence. Many disbelievers have come to believe and many sinners have turned to righteousness through the *Jamā'at's Da'wah* efforts.

But the members of the *Jamā'at* are in need of knowledge. I have been told that some of them do not want to seek out knowledge or study it deeply, and they give the excuse that profound studying is only for the scholars. This is a mistake for which I criticize them.

News has also reached us that the leaders of this group who live in certain countries are upon deviance in their *'Aqīdah* (beliefs). If this holds true, then we must warn against them and limit their *da'wah* to within the borders of our country (so that it is not influenced by those leaders), making sure that it is performed according to a manner that is legislated in Islām.

At any rate, I think that there is much good in the *Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh*, though they are not free from shortcomings. And if news about its leaders, who live outside of our country, is true, then we must warn against them. *Alḥamdulillāh* (all praise is for Allāh), we have scholars and righteous people in our country, so that there is no need for people to leave it [and consult scholars that live abroad, especially in this case, because the scholars and leaders of the said group are said to be deviant in their beliefs].

From where did Islām proceed from? Was it not from these lands? *Īmān* will return to these lands, and by this I mean, to Madīnah. Because these lands represent the beginning of Islām and the end of Islām on this earth. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Expel the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian Peninsula."[99]

During the sickness that led to his death, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Expel the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula."[100]

And in a ḥadīth that is related by Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "I will indeed remove the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula, until I leave only Muslims [to remain in it]."[101]

Why did the Prophet (ﷺ) specify the Arabian Peninsula in regards to this matter? He (ﷺ) did so to point out the importance of the Peninsula, in that it should remain pure from having two religions co-exist in it: the Religion of Islām and any of the religions of disbelief.

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[99] Ibn Ḥajr mentioned it with this phrasing in *Al-Talkhīs Al-Ḥabīr* (4/139), and he said, "It is agreed upon with the wording, 'Expel the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula..."

[100] A portion of a ḥadīth related by Al-Bukhārī (3168), in the chapter, "Expelling the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula." Muslim (1637) related it as well, in the chapter, "Not Making One's Will for One who has Nothing to Bequeath," from the ḥadīth of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه).

[101] Related by Muslim (1767), in the chapter, "Removing the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula," from the ḥadīth of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه).

It is not from the Sunnah to Specify how Long one should Go Out to Perform *Da'wah*

104) Three days, forty days, or four months - what is the ruling for traveling for these periods of time with the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh?

As far as I know, there is no basis in the Sunnah for going out to perform *Da'wah* or to visit brothers for a set period of time, regardless of whether that period is one day, one week, one month, or otherwise. But the people who organize trips for a set number of days or months do so in order to organize their time and their trips, so that their affair does not become one of chaos. So what they are doing in this regard is not considered as a goal in and of itself but rather as a means of reaching their goal – of organizing their time. Therefore, I see no harm in what they are doing, as long as they do not consider their practice to be an act of worship, [thinking that to go out for exactly forty days, for instance, is from the Religion].

Making Rounds in the Neighbourhood has no Basis in the Religion

105) In neighbourhoods that have a Masjid, some (members of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh) make rounds [asking people to come to the Masjid], claiming that they are applying one of the practices of the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Companions (ﷺ). What is the Islāmic ruling in regards to their practice?

If what they are doing is a means of achieving a goal – which is encouraging people to pray in the *Masjid* – then we have discussed this in the previous question. As to them doing that practice, thinking that the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions (ﷺ) applied it, I know of no precedent for it from the authentic Sunnah. Whoever claims that it is from the Sunnah, then he must present proof to support his claim, and if he does, we will accept it from him and apply the same practice, *insha-Allāh*.

Mutual Consultation is from the Qualities of the Believers

106) The Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh organizes a weekly meeting for mutual consultation, but the members of the group that are invited to this meeting are not scholars but are only members of long-standing. What is the Islāmic ruling in regards to their consultation meeting?

Mutual consultation is from the qualities of the believers, for in describing the believers, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ

And who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation. (Qur'ān 42:38)

Allāh (ﷻ) commanded the one man who was wisest and most knowledgeable – Muḥammad (ﷺ) – to consult others:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي ٱلْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ

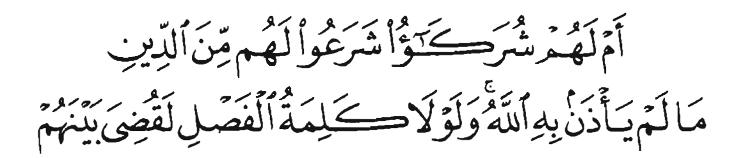
> And consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 3:159)

One should consult with people who are known for strength, intelligence, and trustworthiness. They should be upright in their Religion and sound in their opinions, so that one can find enlightenment in their views.

Worship is Restricted to what is Legislated in the *Sharī'ah*

107) I went out with certain Du'āt – may Allāh grant them success –and the way in which they conducted their study circles was to have two or three people sit together. Together they would revise the last ten chapters of the Qur'ān, then the Tashahud, and then invocations of sending prayers upon the Prophet (ﷺ). What is the ruling for following this order of remembering Allāh (ﷻ) on a continual basis, as if the order of performing the said deeds is itself an act of worship?

Acts of worship are restricted to what has been legislated in the *Sharī'ah*, so it is forbidden for one embark upon an act of worship that was not legislated by Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) censured those who apply practices that He (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ) did not prescribe:



> Or have they partners with Allāh (ﷻ) (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allāh (ﷻ) has not allowed. And had it not been for a decisive Word (gone forth already), the matter would have been judged between them. (Qur'ān 42:21)

Acts of worship are therefore restricted in form, in amount, in description, in time, in place, and in cause. Every act of worship must be in harmony with the *Sharī'ah* in all of these matters. So the specific order of actions outlined by the questioner requires proof from the authentic Sunnah, and if anyone can present that proof, we will accept it. But as the matter stands, I know of nothing related from the Prophet (ﷺ) that indicates the said order of remembering Allāh (ﷻ) and reciting the Qur'ān. I advise my brothers who are in charge of this group to forsake this practice, replacing it with one that is established in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). That is better for them and will lead them to better results.

These are Good Qualities, but they are still Lacking

108) Discussions in the study circles of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh are limited to six topics, which are known to them as the "six points": realizing the Good Word (Lā ilāha illa Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh); the prayer, which should be performed with humility and submission; knowledge that is accompanied by remembrance; honouring other Muslims; correcting one's intention; performing Da'wah to the way of Allāh, which means going out with the Jamā'at in the way of Allāh. My question is this: are these points comprehensive of the teachings of Islām, so that a Muslim does not need anything else? If these points are not comprehensive, please explain how they are lacking?

Without a doubt, the best speech is Allāh's speech; and the best guidance is that of the Prophet (ﷺ). So the best, clearest, and most comprehensive speech is that of Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), and in one sitting, the Messenger (ﷺ) clarified the Religion in its entirety. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) relates:

> One day, while we were seated with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), a man appeared before us, wearing an extremely white garment and having extremely black hair. No sign of travel could be seen upon him, and no one from us knew him. He sat before the Prophet (ﷺ), resting his knees before the Prophet's knees and placing his hands on the Prophet's legs. He said, "O Muḥammad, inform me about Islām."

The Prophet (ﷺ) then mentioned to him the pillars of Islām. The man said, "Inform me about *Īmān*," and so the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned to him the pillars of *Īmān*. He then asked, "Inform me about *Iḥsān*," and the Prophet (ﷺ) informed him about it. The man then asked about the Hour, and the Prophet (ﷺ) answered that he did not know when it would arrive. The man left. 'Umar (ﷺ) continues the narrative:

> "We remained in our place for a while, and then he (the Prophet (ﷺ)) said, 'O 'Umar, do you know who the questioner was?' I said, 'Allāh and His Messenger know best.' He (ﷺ) said, 'He is Jibrīl, who has come to teach you your Religion.'"[102]

In your question, you mentioned points that are no doubt good, but they are not complete; the Religion that Muḥammad (ﷺ) came with is comprehensively expressed in the aforesaid ḥadīth of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ), for the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "He is Jibrīl, who has come to teach you your Religion." I advise the brothers who have established and adopted these six principles to alter their course and to follow what is related by 'Umar (ﷺ) in this important ḥadīth, which the Prophet (ﷺ) described as being the Religion. By learning and realizing in one's life the five pillars of Islām, then the six pillars of *Īmān*, and then *Iḥsān*, one will have followed the Religion in its entirety.

This *Tafsīr* is not Correct

109) Many members of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh give the following explanation for Lā ilāha illa Allāh (None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh): "It is removing false certainty from the heart about matters and bringing into the heart correct certainty of belief about Allāh (ﷺ) – that there is no Creator but

[102] Related by Al-Bukhārī (50), in the chapter, "Jibrīl (ﷺ) Questions to the Prophet (ﷺ) about *Īmān* and..." He related it elsewhere (4777), from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ). Muslim (8) related it, in the chapter, "The Clarification of *Īmān*, Islām, and *Iḥsān*..." from the ḥadīth of 'Umar (ﷺ).

Allāh, no Provider except Allāh, no Sustainer of the universe but Allāh..." Is this explanation (tafseer) correct? If it is not correct, then what is the correct explanation of "Lā ilāha illa Allāh?"

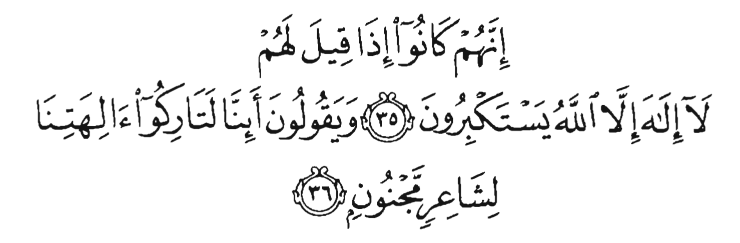
The explanation you mentioned is not correct, because it only covers *Tawḥīd Al-Rubūbiyyah* (The Oneness of Allāh in His Lordship: He is the Lord of the entire universe, its Creator, Sustainer, etc.). And it is well-known that one does not enter Islām by believing only in *Tawḥīd Al-Rubūbiyyah*; otherwise the polytheists to whom the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent would have been considered as being Muslims. Their blood would have been inviolable because they did in fact believe that Allāh (ﷻ) alone is the Creator, Provider, and Sustainer of the universe, but in spite of this belief of theirs, they did not enter into the fold of Islām. The Prophet (ﷺ) deemed lawful their blood and wealth, and he (ﷺ) deemed lawful taking their women and children as prisoners; in short, they were not Muslims.

This is the correct meaning of the phrase of *Tawḥid* (*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*): None deserves to be worshipped but Allāh, and all those that are worshipped instead of Allāh are false deities. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



That is because Allāh (ﷻ)- He is the Truth, and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is *Bāṭil* (falsehood). And verily, Allāh (ﷻ)-He is the Most High, the Most Great. (Qur'ān 22:62)

This is the correct meaning that Muslims have understood from the phrase of *Tawḥīd*; in fact, even the polytheists understood from it the same meaning, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said about them:



Truly, when it was said to them (to the polytheists): *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* ("none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh (ﷻ))," they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it). And (they) said: "Are we going to abandon our *aliha* (gods) for the sake of a mad poet? (Qur'ān 37:35,36)

Although they recognized that Allāh (ﷻ) is the sole Creator, Sustainer, Provider, they knew that the phrase of *Tawḥīd* required more from them: that they worship none save Allāh (ﷻ). If anything, this shows that the polytheists had a greater understanding of the phrase of *Tawḥīd* than do those whom you referred to in your question – those who say that it simply means certainty and *Īmān* (belief) in Allāh (ﷻ) as the Creator and Provider.

This issue has grave implications, so anyone who falsely interprets the phrase of *Tawḥīd* in the way you described needs to repent to Allāh (ﷻ) and needs to return to its correct explanation, the one that Muslims have agreed upon, the one that even the polytheists whom the Prophet (ﷺ) fought believed in: None truly deserves to be worshipped but Allāh. The people you mentioned must return to the truth, recognizing that *Tawḥīd Al-Rubūbiyyah* is one matter and *Tawḥīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* (Oneness of Allāh in worship, i.e., none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh) is another matter, and one is not complete without the other.

Tawḥīd Al-Rubūbiyyah is pointed to in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):



Verily your Lord is the All-Knowing Creator. (Qur'ān 15:86)

And among other similar verses, the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

All the praises and thanks be to Allāh (ﷻ), the Lord of the *Ālamīn* (mankind, *jinns* and all that exists). (Qur'ān 1:2)

Tawḥīd Al-Ulūhiyyah is indicated in this saying of Allāh (ﷻ):



Allāh (ﷻ) bears witness that *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. *La ilaha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. (Qur'ān 3:18)

The people you referred to need to repent and need to recognize and believe that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that He has no partner. We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to guide us all to the straight path, the path of those

whom Allāh (ﷻ) blessed – from the Prophets, the *Ṣiddīqīn* (i.e., those followers of the Prophet, who were first and foremost to believe; for example, Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq), the martyrs, and the righteous ones.

Group Supplication has no Basis to it in the *Sharī' ah*

110) What is the ruling in regards to the group supplication that the members of Jamā' at Al-Tablīgh perform after one of their Bayāns (sermons) or while they are leaving the Masjid to go out to make their rounds in the neighbourhood?

After a sermon, while leaving the *Masjid*, when going to perform *Da' wah* – during none of these or other occasions is there a basis in the *Sharī' ah* for engaging in group supplication. Instead, group supplication is a kind of *bid' ah* (innovation), which is why people who perform it should be advised and told that what they are doing is not in fact from the *Sharī' ah*.

Weekly *I'tikāf* (Staying in the Mosque Overnight for Worship) is *bid' ah* (an Innovation)

111) What is the ruling regarding the weekly I'tikāf of the Jamā' at Al-Tablīgh, which they practice every Thursday in their Masjids? They justify their weekly I'tikāf, arguing that the following is related in a ḥadīth: "Whoever spends the night in a house (i.e., Masjid) from the houses of Allāh, then Allāh (ﷻ) will separate him from the Hellfire at a distance of three ditches, the distance between one of these ditches and the next being the distance between the heavens and the earth."[103]

[103] Refer to *Al-Targhīb Wa l-Tarhīb* (2/150). Al-Mundhirī said, "Al-Ṭabarānī related it in *Al-Awsaṭ*; Al-Bayhaqī related it as well, and this wording is his. And Al-Ḥākim related it in truncated form." Refer to *Al-Dur Al-Manthūr* (1/202), *Tārīkh Al-Baghdād* (4/127), *Al-' Ilal-Al-Mutanāhiyah* (2/26), and *Tadhkirat al-Mauḍū' āt* (69). And the ḥadīth is *Ḍa' īf* (weak).

It is definitely a *bid'ah* (an innovation) to perform *I'tikāf* every Thursday night; nothing is authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ) to indicate that he specified Thursday for *I'tikāf*. Nor is it related from him that he (ﷺ) performed *I'tikāf* other than in *Ramaḍān*; at first during the opening ten days of *Ramaḍān* and then during its middle ten days, and he (ﷺ) performed it, seeking out the night of *Al-Qadr*. When he (ﷺ) was informed that the night of *Al-Qadr* is during the last ten nights of *Ramaḍān*, he (ﷺ) began to perform *I'tikāf* during those nights, and he (ﷺ) continued upon this way until he (ﷺ) died. Only in a single instance did the Prophet (ﷺ) perform *I'tikāf* outside of *Ramaḍān*. In that year, he (ﷺ) did not perform *I'tikāf* during the last ten nights of *Ramaḍān*, so he made up those nights by performing it in *Shawāl* (the next month). Otherwise, there was an occasion in which permission was given to 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) to fulfill an oath he made to perform *I'tikāf* one day in Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām. As for the ḥadīth that the questioner mentioned, I do not know it to be authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ).

By Performing Ḥajj, one does not become Prevented from Performing *Da'wah* to the Way of Allāh

112) Members of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh give precedence to going out for Da'wah over an obligatory deed – performing Ḥajj. One of them was asked, "Did not you make the obligatory Ḥajj yet?" He said, "No." He was then asked, "Do you have the ability and the provision you need to perform this obligatory deed?" He said, "Yes. I have all that I need to perform Ḥajj, but before intending to make Ḥajj, I had already made an intention to first go out in the way of Allāh." Noble Shaykh, what is your view regarding this issue?

This issue – delaying Ḥajj though one is able to perform it – is one of disagreement among the people of knowledge. Some scholars hold that one does not have to perform Ḥajj immediately upon being able to perform it, but this opinion is the weaker one. The correct view is that Ḥajj becomes obligatory as soon as one is able to perform it. It is not permissible, therefore, for one to delay it in order to first go out to perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). In fact, when a believer goes to perform Ḥajj, he can call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) at the same time, for there are more opportunities to perform *da'wah* during Ḥajj than there are on any other occasion.

Certain *Karāmāt* can Occur for the *Awliyā'* (Righteous Slaves of Allāh) of Allāh

113) Members of the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh claim that only those who go out with them to perform Da'wah can have Karāmāt (miracles) occur for them. Please explain the correct view in this issue.

"*Al-Karāmah* (singular of *Karāmāt*)" is an extraordinary occurrence that transcends normal experience. Allāh (ﷻ) makes *Karāmāt* occur at the hands of one of His righteous slaves, to honour him and to make him firmer upon the truth or to support the truth that he is upon. Such occurrences took place during, before, and after the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). The story of the cave people and of Maryam, the daughter of Imrān, are just two examples of *Karāmāt*, which will continue to occur for this Nation until the Day of Resurrection. The scholars have mentioned that *Karāmāt* only occurs for Allāh's righteous slaves, who believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and fear Him, regardless of whether they go out to perform *da'wah* in the way of Allāh (ﷻ) or they limit themselves to individual worship or their situation is otherwise.

How can *Da'wah* without Knowledge be Correct?

114) It is well-known about the Jamā'at Al-Tablīgh that its members do not pay attention to gaining knowledge, but they do not stop at that: they even reproach others that are of their level for seeking out knowledge. They argue that there were few scholars among the Companions and that not all of them would seek out knowledge, because most of their efforts were concentrated on performing Da'wah to the teachings of Islām. Please clarify the correct view in this issue.

The view you reported evinces a great deal of ignorance, for I do not see how their *da'wah* can be correct without knowledge. The plain truth is that *da'wah* is not correct without knowledge, a ruling that is based on the saying of Allāh (ﷻ):

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allāh (ﷻ)

i.e. to the Oneness of Allāh (ﷻ)- Islāmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge. (Qur'ān 12:108)

One can only be a *dā' ī* (caller) after he gains knowledge about the matter he is inviting others to follow. The people of *da' wah*, therefore, must first learn and apply what they learn and then invite others.

We must be One Group; United

115) Some governments [in Muslim countries] call for a multi-party system, with the government being run by one of the official parties. The system of government that is applied in such countries is most often not in harmony with the Islāmic Sharī' ah, and very often the ruling party consists of Muslim and non-Muslim members. What is the Islāmic ruling concerning this situation?

Every Muslim country must have one party only, the party of Allāh (ﷻ), which is responsible for applying Allāh's *Sharī' ah* in all the affairs of society – affairs of worship (man's relation with his Lord); affairs of dealings among individuals, such as family related issues; and affairs that concern society as a whole, such as economic and military issues.

To establish such a rule is the responsibility of every government that rules over a Muslim country, because Muslims give a mandate to their rulers to govern their affairs, stipulating that they apply Allāh's *Sharī' ah*, for Muslims want Islām to be the sole legislative authority in the lands they live in.

Therefore it is compulsory upon every government that rules over a land populated by Muslims to return to the Qur'ān and Sunnah and to unite all political as well as non-political groups, forming one group: the party of Allāh (ﷻ) that applies Allāh's *Sharī' ah*. The existence of one party only – the party of Allāh (ﷻ) – will certainly not have a harmful effect on the Muslim Nation, as opposed to the multi-party system that is followed [in various countries]. Allāh (ﷻ) clarified that disputes – which result when Muslims are divided into groups and parties – lead to failure:

وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفۡشَلُواْ وَتَذۡهَبَ رِيحُكُمۡ

And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. (Qur'ān 8:46)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَٰتُ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment. (Qur'ān 3:105)

A General Workers' Strike

116) What is the Islāmic ruling with regard to people organizing a general workers' strike, demanding the government to change from a secular system of rule to an Islāmic one?

To be sure, this issue has many dangerous implications. First, I know of no basis in the *Sharī'ah* that would provide grounds for a workers' strike, regardless of whether the strike takes place in the private or government sector. Second, the bigger the size and scope of a workers' strike, the more numerous and comprehensive will be its harmful results.

The questioner made it clear that he was referring to the toppling of a secular government. Well, in every situation, we must first be sure that we are dealing with a secular government. Let us suppose that it is indeed a secular government; it is not permissible to rebel against the authority in any given country unless certain conditions are fulfilled. These conditions are outlined in the ḥadīth of 'Ubādah Ibn Al-Ṣāmit (ﷺ), in which he (ﷺ) said:

> "We made *Bai'ah* (pledged allegiance) to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to listen and obey, when we are active and willing as well as when we are reluctant (and lazy); when it is difficult or easy for us; and even when a ruling goes against us or against our inclinations. [We also pledged allegiance] to not dispute the matter with (or rebel against) those in authority, and he said, 'unless you see clear and open disbelief, and with you is *Burhān* (clear proof from the Qur'ān and Sunnah) from Allāh.'"[104]

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[104] Related by Al-Bukhārī (7056), in the chapter, "The saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'You will See after me Matters that you Repudiate." He related it elsewhere as well (7200). Muslim related it in the chapter, "The Compulsory Duty of Obeying Rulers without.."

Only after five conditions are fulfilled can the people rebel against the ruling authority; four conditions are taken from the above-mentioned ḥadīth, and the last one is derived from the principles of the *Sharī' ah*:

1) You know for sure that those in authority have perpetrated an act of disbelief.

2) Those in authority have clearly and openly perpetrated an act of disbelief. If they perpetrate wicked deeds and not disbelief, it is not permissible to rebel against them, no matter how great the wicked deeds that they perform are.

3) The act of disbelief is performed openly and clearly, allowing for no alternate interpretation.

4) You have proof from Allāh (ﷻ), and this means that you have clear proof – clear in its wording and implications – from the Qur'ān, Sunnah, or from the consensus of the Muslim Nation (*Ijmā'*). These four conditions are taken from the above-mentioned ḥadīth.

5) This last condition is taken from the universal principles of Islām: those who oppose the leadership of the country have the ability to topple the government's rule, for if they do not have the ability to overthrow the existing authority, but they still try to overthrow it, they will suffer and their cause will suffer; so the harm of attempting a revolt against the government is much greater than the harm that results from remaining silent under the government's leadership, waiting until there is a strong enough movement to demand the application of the *Sharī' ah*.

For a people to overthrow a secular government, these five conditions must be fulfilled. If they are fulfilled, then there is no harm in resorting to a collective strike. But if any one of the five conditions is not fulfilled, it is not permitted to organize a collective strike, nor is it permissible to make any other kind of attempt to defy or overthrow those in authority.

Is it Permissible to Defy the Government?

117) After carrying out a collective strike and after the government does not meet the people's demand of ruling according to the Sharī' ah, is it permissible to defy the government and incite a public uprising?

In my view, a public uprising should not take place in this situation, because, as it is known, all material and military strength is in the hands of the government. With kitchen knives and staffs of shepherds, the public cannot challenge the army and police, who are furnished with tanks and machineguns. If the five conditions mentioned in the previous answer are fulfilled, then a public uprising isn't necessarily the only option open to the public. And at any rate, we must not be rash in our actions, for a country that lived a number of years under colonial rule cannot change into an Islāmic state overnight. We must plan and be patient in order to achieve our objectives.

When one builds a castle, it is established and is ready to be occupied, regardless of whether he lives in it or dies before he moves into it. It is important for us to build an Islāmic stronghold, even if the final results we hope for are achieved only after a number of years [perhaps even beyond our time]. It is my view that we should not be rash in such matters and that we should not take the path of public revolts, which for the most part are chaotic affairs that do not rest on any firm foundation.

A Sit-Down Strike used as a Pressure Tactic

118) Along with collective strikes, some groups organized by the youth engage in what is known as public sit-ins, whereby a number of them will occupy government office buildings, remaining in them for a number of nights and preventing any workers from entering. What is the ruling for such action? Are there any grounds for such action in the Sharī'ah?

The act of a public sit-in as a pressure tactic against the government is, as far as I know, one that originated abroad. At any rate, as long as the means are not *Ḥarām* in and of themselves, they take the same ruling as the ends that are sought after. Therefore the ruling for sit-ins is the same as the ruling we previously mentioned for strikes.

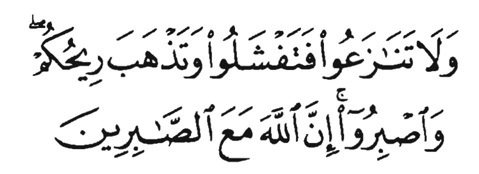
11- *Daʿwah* to the Way of Allāh in Societies wherein Muslims are the Minority

Introduction

Verily, all praise is for Allāh; we praise Him, seek His help, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides none can lead astray, and whomsoever Allāh leads astray none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger. Allāh (ﷻ) sent him with guidance and the true Religion, after a long period had passed since the previous Messenger, so that people were in more need of the Prophet's message than they were of food, drink, and air. He (ﷺ) conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust, sincerely advised the Nation, and strove in the way of Allāh with a true *Jihād* until he expended his very last breath. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations upon Muḥammad, his family, his companions, and all who follow him in goodness until the Last Day.

Allāh (ﷻ) sent the Prophet (ﷺ) with the true Religion, so that it may reign supreme over all other religions. It is the true Religion that contains no falsehood whatsoever and is in perfect harmony with man's instinctive nature and sound mind when it is free from false doubts and desires. The Muslim Nation answered the Prophet's call, and his Religion spread to the various corners of the earth, reaching both East and West.

The Muslim Nation continued to remain victorious over its enemies until division and disputes occurred within the ranks of Muslims, at which time defeat took the place of victory.



> And do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart. And be patient. Surely, Allāh (ﷻ) is with those who are *Al-Sabirin* (the patient ones, etc). (Qur'ān 8:46)

Yet, despite the many setbacks, the Prophet (ﷺ) gave us glad tidings, promising that there will continue to remain a group from his nation that is victorious and upon the truth; they will not be harmed by those who forsake them or oppose them, until the affair of Allāh (ﷻ) arrives (just before the end of the world, when Allāh (ﷻ) will send a good wind that will take the lives of all believers).

My young Muslim brothers: Much have I desired to meet with you; one might have expected this meeting to take place in one of the various countries you live in, but by Allāh's favour and grace, our meeting is taking place here, in the Arabian Peninsula, the starting and end place of revelation. No one doubts that Islām began from this Peninsula, and it is established from the Prophet (ﷺ) that Īmān (faith) returns to Al-Madīnah just as a snake returns to its lair.[105] That we are meeting here is therefore a blessing from Allāh (ﷻ) upon all of us.

Though I have not travelled to your lands, I have heard news of your situation and of the many young, dedicated Muslims who call to Islām, each according to his knowledge and ability. When one seeks perfection in his endeavors, the very fact that he is seeking it indicates he is heading towards completeness. But when one thinks that he is perfect or complete, he is in fact deficient, mainly because his estimation of his level of completeness prevents him from moving forward and improving. On the other hand, the one who strives for completion will continue to strive until he reaches his goal.

وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ

> But over all those endowed with knowledge is the All-Knowing (Allāh). (Qur'ān 12:76)

The Islāmic awakening that is taking place in our lands, in Muslim lands in general, and in the lands of the disbelievers shows very promising signs, for which the believer should be pleased. Yet I must add that the present-day Islāmic awakening needs to be accompanied by wisdom, for whosoever is deprived of wisdom is deprived of much good, and whosoever is blessed with wisdom has been given much good.

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[105] Related by Al-Bukhārī (1876), in the chapter, "*Īmān* Returns to Al-Madīnah." Muslim (147) related it as well, in the chapter, "Verily, Islām Began Strange and will Return Strange..." from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), with the wording, "Verily, *Īmān* (faith) returns to Al-Madīnah just as a snake returns to its lair."

But what is the essence or reality of the wisdom that a *dā'ī* (caller) needs to have in order to correctly convey Islām to others. Wisdom embraces a number of matters:

Firstly, the *dā'ī* must be knowledgeable about what he is inviting others to follow, which is why I hold that one should give precedence to seeking out knowledge over performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). Allāh (ﷻ) said:

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى

> Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "This is my way; I invite unto Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allāh (ﷻ) i.e. to the Oneness of Allāh (ﷻ)- Islāmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge. (Qur'ān 12:108)

One who calls to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) with sure knowledge is able to defend and attack – to defend his Religion by refuting specious claims that are made against it, and to attack by clarifying the inherent falsehood and misguidance of other Religions, whose teachings are not in harmony with the sound mind or with the instinctive nature of man. One who invites others without knowledge is able to do neither; on the contrary, he will be helpless and confused when faced with anyone who presents specious arguments to him. When he stands to call others to Islām, someone might mention false arguments to which he has no answer, and so his confused expression is what people will notice most, and not his message. I feel that such confusion represents a losing situation for Islām.

When I say that the caller should learn before he invites, I am not saying that, as long as he is in the process of learning, he should not perform *da'wah*; on the contrary, he should do both at the same time, but should only invite to those issues that he has learned and has full knowledge about, in which case he will be a student and a caller at the same time. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Convey from me, even if it is a single verse,"

a single verse from Allāh's Book or a single issue that pertains to the Religion.

Secondly, the *dā'ī* should apply the knowledge he learns, for action is the best translator of one's speech. Any speech that is not translated into action will, at least for the most part, end in failure, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said when He (ﷻ) addressed the believers:



O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allāh (ﷻ) that you say that which you do not do. (Qur'ān 61:2,3)

I do not believe that anyone who possesses a sound mind will accept from a preacher who warns people not to commit a certain sin but then commits it himself, or invites people to perform a particular good deed but abstains from it himself. It matters not that the preacher is inviting to good; his audience, seeing his shortcomings, will hesitate to accept from him, for if he is inviting others to take the best course in life, should he not be the first to apply his message?

That the *dā'ī* applies what he learns and invites others to follow is of paramount importance; it was the way of the Prophet (ﷺ). When the king of *Ghassān* described the Prophet (ﷺ), he said:

"Whenever he ordered others to do something, he would be the first to do it, and whenever he would forbid others from something, he would be the first to abstain from it."

To act on one's own speech is one of the ways that a *dā'ī* calls to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) with wisdom, because people do not emulate a *dā'ī* in his speech alone, but in his actions as well. By observing a *dā'ī's* actions, people will at times say to him, "You did such and such deed – why?" Depending on the situation, they will say that or a similar statement, either objecting to his action or seeking guidance from it." The point is that a *dā'ī's* actions are important to people; in fact, they might judge the value of a *dā'ī* more by his actions than they do by his speech.

Thirdly, a *dā'ī* should put each matter in its proper place and lend importance to each matter according to its due weight. For each situation there is speech that is suitable to it, and every person has his own unique circumstances. People are not of the same disposition, nor are they at the same level – in terms of their status, knowledge, practise of the Religion, etc. – so we must deal with each person according to his circumstances. This is why we find that, though people were doing deeds that their Creator was not pleased with, Allāh (ﷻ), who is Most-Wise, raised the people to the truth gradually and in stages.

I offer you the example of alcohol: it was a problem that affected society as a whole, because the people to whom the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent would drink alcohol in the morning, afternoon, and evening. To wean the people in one go away from alcohol was certainly not an easy matter. But Allāh (ﷻ), with His Wisdom and Knowledge, or rather, with His Wisdom and Mercy, made people quit alcohol in a manner that they could tolerate. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَآ إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا

They ask you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." (Qur'ān 2:219)

Though this verse might not outright forbid alcohol, the way it explains the reality of alcohol should be enough, I believe, to motivate any person of sound mind to abstain from alcohol; these words are enough to have that effect:

وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا

"But the sin of them is greater than their benefit."

As long as a person of sound mind knows that the sin of doing something is greater than the benefit derived, one does not need to outright forbid him from it: a feeling from within his own self, and not a prohibition from the *Sharī'ah*, prevents him from drinking alcohol.

Then Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا۟

O you who believe! Approach not *Al-Ṣalāt* (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter. (Qur'ān 4: 43)

How many prayers are there? Five – so if Allāh (ﷻ) forbade them from coming to the prayer while they were in a drunken state, it meant that during five periods of every day, they would avoid alcohol. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

لَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ

Approach not *Al-Ṣalāt* (the prayer). (Qur'ān 4:43)

This means that they would have to forsake alcohol before the time of prayer began, so that they would not approach it in a drunken state, and so that they would know what they were saying during prayer. This was the second stage: people were made to become accustomed to staying away from alcohol for certain periods at a time.

Then Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْخَمْرُ وَٱلْمَيْسِرُ وَٱلْأَنصَابُ وَٱلْأَزْلَٰمُ رِجْسٌ
مِّنْ عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَٱجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ
وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kind of alcoholic drinks), gambling, *Al-Anṣāb*, and *Al-Azlām* (arrows for seeking luck and decision) are an abomination of *Shayṭān's* (Satan) handiwork. So avoid that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. *Shayṭān* (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allāh (ﷻ) and from *Al-Ṣalāt* (the prayer). So will you not then abstain? (Qur'ān 5:90,91)

In this verse, alcohol is categorically forbidden at all times and on all occasions.

Having mentioned an example of a prohibition coming into effect gradually and in stages, we now discuss an example of a required deed being legislated in the same manner. Fasting the month of *Ramaḍān* entails curbing one's desires – for food, drink, and sexual intercourse.

فَٱلْـَٰٔنَ بَٰشِرُوهُنَّ
وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مَا كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ
ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلصِّيَامَ
إِلَى ٱلَّيْلِ

So now have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allāh (ﷻ) has ordained for you (offspring), and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), and then complete your *Saum* (fast) till the nightfall. (Qur'ān 2:187)

It is not easy for people to keep these desires in check, especially during the sultry, long summer days. But when Allāh (ﷻ) first legislated fasting, He (ﷻ), with His wisdom and mercy, made fasting optional, allowing people to choose between fasting – if that was what one wanted – and feeding a poor person for every day:


وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ

يُطِيقُونَهُۥ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا۟ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *Miskīn* (poor person) (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know. (Qur'ān 2:184)

Then, in the next verse, Allāh (ﷻ) prescribed fasting, removing the option to feed a poor person instead of fasting (except for the very aged, for example, who are not able to fast):

شَهْرُ
رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهْرَ
فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ
أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

The month of *Ramaḍān* in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of *Ramaḍān*), he must observe *Saum* (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe *Saum* (fasts) must be made up] from other days. (Qur'ān 2:185)

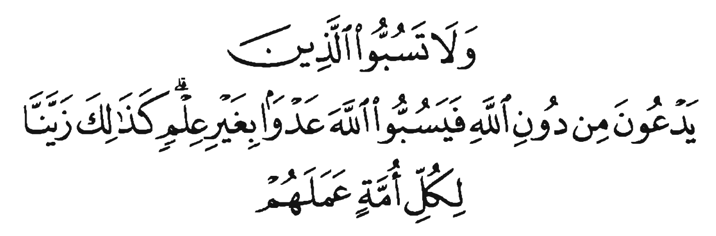
Allāh (ﷻ) prescribed fasting in stages, at first allowing people to choose. Then by the time fasting became prescribed without anyone being given a choice in the matter, people had become accustomed to fasting, and the new legislation became easier for them to apply.

Even now, we can, and we should, invite others to Islām in stages, first inviting them to the *Tawḥīd* of Allāh (ﷻ) (Islāmic Monotheism). Next, if they answer our invitation to *Tawḥīd*, we order them to pray; then to pay *Zakāt*; then to fast; then to perform Ḥajj. Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) related that when the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (رضي الله عنه) to Yemen, he (ﷺ) ordered him to begin by calling them to the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"If they answer you in that, inform them that Allāh (ﷻ) has made five prayers compulsory upon them every day and night. If they answer you in that, inform them that Allāh has made charity compulsory upon them from their wealth; it is taken from the rich among them and is then returned to the poor among them." (Al-Bukhārī)

It is therefore from wisdom that we gradually progress with the person we are inviting, progressing at a pace that is appropriate to his circumstances and that is most conducive to him accepting our message. Were you to say to someone, "You are upon misguidance," or, "You are a loser," or, "You are from the dwellers of the Hellfire," then no good will result; instead, you would only have succeeded in driving people away from Islām.

Contemplate this verse:



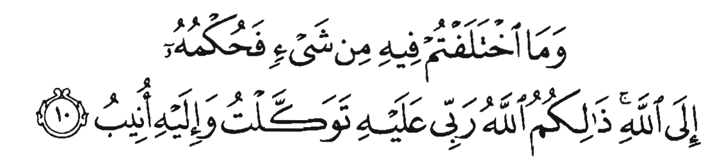
And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allāh (ﷻ), lest they insult Allāh (ﷻ) wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings. (Qur'ān 6:108)

In your view, is it a commendable deed to insult the false idols that the polytheists worship? Your answer should be yes; however, if a greater evil results by us doing so, then we should remember this saying of Allāh (ﷻ). From this verse, the scholars have inferred an important rule: "Warding off evil is more important than bringing about a benefit when the two are equal or are at a close level to one another." This too is from wisdom in performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

Fourthly, the dā'ī must work to unite the ranks of Muslims – I mean those Muslims who follow the way of our pious predecessors. Who are those who truly represented Islām and realized the requirements of *Īmān* (faith)? They are our pious predecessors – the Companions, the *Tābi'iūn* (generation after the Companions), and the generation after them; the three superior generations of our Nation. To realize Islām and Īmān in one's life means to follow their way, and one falls into misguidance to the degree that one deviates from their way. Let me express this in different terms: it is from wisdom that we unite the ranks of Muslim *du'āt* (callers), and that is achieved by calling upon all of them to follow the way of our pious predecessors. The Prophet (ﷺ) said that his Nation is going to divide into 73 groups; each one of them is in the Hellfire except for one:

"Those who are upon what he (the Prophet (ﷺ)) and his Companions (ﷺ) are upon."[106] And in another narration, "It (the saved group) is *Al-Jamā'ah*, those that are gathered upon the truth."[107]

On the other hand, minor differences that do not involve anyone departing from the way of our pious predecessors should not be the cause of dispute, disunity, or enmity. Minor differences of opinion existed during the era of the Companions (ﷺ), yet they remained united as one Nation, one Nation in their goals and deeds, but not necessarily in agreement over every issue that is related to *Īmān* and the Religion, for differences of opinion are unavoidable. The important principle for us to realize is that it is compulsory upon every believer to refer any matter of disagreement to Allāh's Book and the Messenger's Sunnah. Then, in the case that the truth becomes clear in one's mind, one must accept it, even if that truth is contrary to what he was previously following or, in some cases, blindly following. Allāh (ﷻ) says:



And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allāh (ﷻ) (He is the ruling Judge). (And say O Muḥammad (ﷺ) to these polytheists). Such is Allāh (ﷻ), my Lord in Whom I put my trust, and to Him I turn in all of my affairs and in repentance. (Qur'ān 42:10)

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[106] Related by Al-Tirmidhi (2641); by Al-Ḥākim, in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/218); by Al-Lālikā'i, in *Sharḥ Usūl 'Aitiqād Ahl al-Sunnah* (1/99); by Al-Ājurri, in *Al-Shariah* (5/16); by Al-Mirwazi, in *Al-Sunnah* (18); and by Ibn Waddāh, in *Al-bid'ah Wa l-Nahyi 'Anhā* (85), from the ḥadith of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr (ﷺ). There are other narrations that attest to this ḥadith, raising it to the level of *Ḥasan*. Al-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Īd Al-'Abbāsi – may Allāh preserve him – said, "There is weakness in this narration, but there are many [revealed] texts that attest to its meaning." Refer to *Fitnat al-Takfir*, by Al-'Allāmah Al-Albāni, with commentary by Ibn Bāz and Ibn 'Uthaymin (15).

[107] Related by Ibn Mājah (3992); by Ibn Abi 'Āsim, in *Al-Sunnah* (1/32); by Al-Ṭabarāni, in *Al-Kabir* (18/70); by Al-Lālikā'i, in *Sharḥ Usūl 'Aitiqād Ahl al-Sunnah* (1/101); and by Al-Ḥākim, in his *Mustadrak* (1/47). In *Tahqiq Al-Sunnah* of Ibn Abi 'Āsim, Al-Albāni said, "Its chain is good, and the men of the chain are all known and trustworthy, except for 'Abbād Ibn Yūsuf, and he is trustworthy, *insha-Allāh*." Al-Albāni ruled that its chain is authentic in *Al-Silsilah Al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (204).

Through another chain, it is related by Abū Dāwūd (4597); Aḥmad, in *Al-Musnad* (4/102); Al-Ḥākim, in his *Mustadrak* (1/128); Ibn Abi 'Āsim, in *Al-Sunnah* (1/7), and others. The narrators of this chain are all trustworthy except for one, Azhar, for the scholars have differed regarding him. And he is truthful.

"And in whatsoever you differ" indicates that differences of opinion are inevitable, but the question remains – to whom should we refer our differences for judgement. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

> The decision thereof is with Allāh (ﷻ).

In another verse, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

فَإِن تَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ
تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

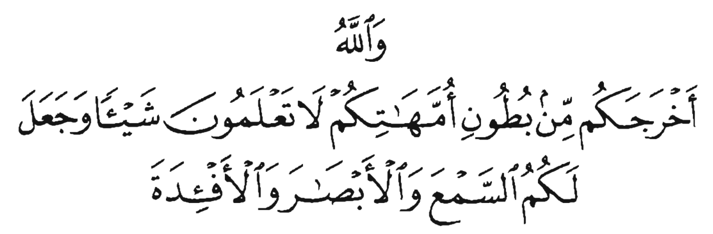
> (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and in the last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (Qur'ān 4:59)

"That is better" for the present and for where we are headed in the future. To refer our differences to Allāh (ﷻ) means that we refer them to Allāh's Book. To refer differences to the Prophet (ﷺ), while he was alive, meant referring them to him directly. And after he (ﷺ) died, it meant referring them to his Sunnah. When our intention is to refer our differences to the Qur'ān and Sunnah for judgement; when we are not trying to make our view or the view of the *Imām* we are following triumph over the views of others, when we truly desire to apply Allāh's *Sharī'ah* according to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and when we have the wherewithal to infer rulings from proofs, then, in reality, we agree with one another, for our goals and the path we follow is one and the same. Problems arise when one wants nothing other than for people to follow his view – whether that view was arrived at by his own *ijtihād* or he is blindly following someone whom he wants others to blindly follow as well. This is a grave mistake. If one wants others to follow him in all of his views, then he has set himself up on the same level as the Messenger (ﷺ), for the only person whom we must follow in all of what he says and does is the Messenger (ﷺ).

Therefore, I advise you not to set yourself up as a rival to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ); instead, make the truth be your guide, so that you embrace it whenever someone points it out to you. Know that it is from Allāh's favours upon you that He (ﷻ) blesses you with someone who points out the truth for you. It often happens that one holds an opinion in an issue, thinking that he is upon the truth, but then, after discussing the issue with a scholar, realizes that the correct view is not the one he held. This happens even among scholars, which is why two views are sometimes related from the same scholar (his former view and his most recent view).

Yes, in a single issue we might come across two views from the *Imāms* of Islām, even from the rightly-guided *Khalīfahs*, such as 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb

(ﷺ) or from the major *Imāms* of Islām, such as Imām Aḥmad. Why does this occur? It occurs because one's knowledge increases as time goes on, so that with new information [and a better understanding], one constantly renews his views.



And Allāh (ﷻ) has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts. (Qur'ān 16: 78)

I might be unaware of a certain proof for a long time, but then Allāh (ﷻ) blesses me so that I come across it; or the implications of that proof might remain hidden to me, either because of a lack of knowledge or a lack of contemplation, but then Allāh (ﷻ) grants me understanding. In another situation, I might not know another proof whose implications are contrary to the implications of the proof that I know, but then I come across that other proof, and the issue becomes clear to me.

I call upon all of you from the youth to make the Islāmic proof be your guide and leader. And if two parties from you differ, with each party making *ijtihād* and having a good intention, do not allow your differences to lead to disputes and division, for if you do, your united strength will depart.

Fifthly, Muslims who live as a minority group in any country must have someone who is an authoritative source, someone who can lead them and resolve minor differences. He can be designated as the *Amīr* or leader, but the important thing is that he is needed, for people are not in a good situation without a leader and without an authoritative source. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered that any group consisting of at least three people must choose a leader who makes the final decision in matters. The concept of having a leader is even applied among animals; scientists tell us that flocks of birds in the sky have a leader among them; it guides and directs the other birds; similarly, a group of antelope always has a leader over it.

In countries wherein Muslims are the minority, Islām is not applied, and perhaps, it might even be fought against. We definitely need a leader, then, to steer us in the right direction and unite us. But whom do we choose?

If a person has two qualities, then he is qualified to be a leader: strength and trustworthiness. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ ٱسْتَـْٔجَرْتَ ٱلْقَوِىُّ ٱلْأَمِينُ

Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy. (Qur'ān 28:26)

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ ۖ وَإِنِّى عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِىٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

An *Ifrīt* (strong) from the *jinns* said: "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, indeed I am strong, and trustworthy for such work." (Qur'ān 27:39)

If we find a person who is both strong and trustworthy, to the highest degree among possible candidates, then we should appoint him to be our *Amīr* (leader). If, for instance, the best person we find is strong but he is deficient in his trustworthiness, we should appoint to him a trustworthy minister, so that each of the two complements the other. Similarly, if the best person we find is trustworthy but not strong, we should appoint to him a minister who is strong. When I say that we should choose a leader who is strong and trustworthy, it is implied that he should be a scholar as well – knowledgeable about Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, about peoples' circumstances, about what matters are most pressing, because knowledge is the source and foundation of strength. My brothers who are scattered in non-Muslim countries, I call upon you to appoint an *Amīr* or leader; the title is not important, but the role he plays is.

You will derive a number of benefits from appointing a leader over you:

1) When you differ among yourselves, you can refer your disagreement to him. It is inevitable that misunderstandings and disagreements occur among human beings, so they need someone who will act as a judge, ruling between two parties when there is a misunderstanding between them and making final decisions in matters of disagreement. A person who assumes such duties needs to fear Allāh (ﷻ) in searching out for and ascertaining the truth.

2) You may need to organize charitable organizations to collect donations to support *da'wah* activities or to help the poor among you or to promote other good causes. Under a trusted leadership, you will be able to carry out these duties.

3) Various circumstances arrive wherein a leader is needed. For instance, if one of you wants to marry a Muslim woman who does not have a *Walī* (guardian), then the leader among you can fulfill

that role. The people of knowledge say that if a woman is in a place that has no *Imām* (Muslim ruler) or someone appointed by the *Imām* or righteous relatives that can act as her *Walī* (guardian), then a person of authority – someone whom the community chooses to be leader, for instance – where she lives can marry her off.

4) With a leader over you, you will be organized so that a person cannot make a statement or decision that represents your community without your leader's permission. Each one of us acts individually, representing his own self, but to act representing the entire community is an altogether different matter. This is why Allāh (ﷻ) said about the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) that they do not follow any course of action without referring to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Sixthly, the *dā'ī* must not be extreme or rash in his actions. When one does an act out of rashness, he may be sincere and zealous, but rash actions are committed at a price, especially in non-Muslim countries where the price can be an end to *da'wah* efforts. Therefore, to not think out matters first and then follow the best possible course is dangerous and contrary to wisdom.

Seventhly, the *dā'ī* must be sincere to Allāh (ﷻ), believing that he is inviting others to Allāh's Religion, to what will benefit them in this world and in the Hereafter, and to what will bring them closer to Allāh (ﷻ) and to Paradise. The *dā'ī* should feel these things because he is inviting Allāh's slaves to achieve a good life in this world and good reward in the Hereafter:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ
أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

> Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment, and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter). (Qur'ān 16:97)

I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to guide us and to make us guides to the truth, to make us righteous and promoters of righteousness. And I ask Allāh (ﷻ) to grant you success; indeed, He (ﷻ) is Munificent, Most Generous. All praise is for Allāh, Lord of all that exists. O Allāh, send prayers and salutations upon our Prophet, Muḥammad, upon his family, and upon all of his companions.

The Muslim Minority must have a Leader

119) In Muslim countries, there are a number of government agencies and private organizations that take care of the needs of the people.

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ

The believers, men and women, are *Awliyā'* (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another. (Qur'ān 9:71)

In non-Muslim countries, however, Muslims are scattered, with no one to look after them. Should they establish centers and charitable organizations? And if they do manage to organize themselves and choose a leader, to what extent is that leader deserving of their obedience?

I do not think that it is a good thing for Muslims to be scattered; people are social by nature, and after Allāh's help, they need other people to help them in their affairs. Hence, Muslim minorities need to be organized with an appointed leader among them, so that as a group, they can be more effective in performing *da' wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ).

When it comes to the question of how to organize Muslim minorities, I cannot give a general rule that is applicable to every non-Muslim country. Muslim minorities vary in their size, their voice in society, and their economic power. I will say this: wisdom in distributing responsibilities goes a long way to fulfilling our goals. One *dā' ī* invites people to Islām in the *Masjid*; another invites people individually; another gathers donations; yet another is responsible for the money that comes in, and so on. And although I cannot give advice that is comprehensive for Muslim minorities in different non-Muslim countries, I stress the need for each community to appoint a leader, whom they can refer to for making decisions.

The Matters that are Brought to the Attention of the *Amīr* (Leader)

120) What matters should be brought to the attention of the Amīr (leader)?

In the previous discussion, I mentioned the benefits of having an *Amīr* (leader) that is responsible over the Muslim population living in a non-Muslim country; those benefits are the very matters for which the *Amīr* is responsible. No one among the Muslim population should make a decision in those matters unless he first gets permission from the *Amīr*; otherwise, division and perhaps even chaos may result.

The Performance of Plays in *Masjids* or Islāmic Centers

121) In our communities, there are Islāmic centers, which comprise of Mosques, banquet halls, and lecture halls, all in the same building. In these centers, we sometimes organize plays that impart a good message and that do not contain any music. Is it permissible for us to stage such plays in the Masjid? Sometimes, there is no other hall available for that purpose, and we have no other place to gather.

In our times, scholars have differed about the permissibility of staging plays. Some scholars hold that it is categorically forbidden to stage plays. They argue that a play is a lie; a man pretends to be someone who he is not, and as such he is lying.

Other scholars maintain that there is nothing wrong with plays, arguing that plays do not involve any lying. They say that a lie is to say something that is contrary to reality, contrary to the state of things as they are. An actor, however, does not say, "I am such and such person," but rather says, "I am playing the part of such and such person." This means that he is acting similarly to how the person he is playing acted. These arguments are correct, for the people that are attending a play know its intended purpose, as opposed to the situation of a man who is clearly lying, a man, for instance, who comes to your house, falsely claiming to be somebody else.

So there is no implicit lie involved in staging a play, but if a play consists of something *Ḥarām* (forbidden) – for example, it disparages an esteemed

figure – then it is not permissible to stage that play. For the very same reason, I maintain that the roles of Companions – especially the rightly-guided *Khalīfahs* – must not be played. Similarly, it is not permissible for a man to play the role of a women or vice-versa, for the Prophet (ﷺ) cursed men who imitate women, and women who imitate men.

Similarly, the actors in a play should not imitate animals. In the Qur'ān and Sunnah, whenever a person was compared to an animal, the comparison was made in the context of disparaging that person. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَٱتۡلُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ نَبَأَ ٱلَّذِيٓ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَٱنسَلَخَ مِنۡهَا
فَأَتۡبَعَهُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡغَاوِينَ ١٧٥ وَلَوۡ شِئۡنَا
لَرَفَعۡنَٰهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُۥٓ أَخۡلَدَ إِلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُۚ فَمَثَلُهُۥ
كَمَثَلِ ٱلۡكَلۡبِ

And recite (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to them the story of him to whom We gave Our *Āyāt* but he threw them away, so *Shayṭan* (Satan) followed him up, and he became of those who went astray. And had We willed, We would surely have elevated him therewith but he clung to the earth and followed his own desire. So his description is the description of a dog. (Qur'ān 7:175,176)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

مَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ حُمِّلُواْ ٱلتَّوۡرَىٰةَ ثُمَّ لَمۡ
يَحۡمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ ٱلۡحِمَارِ يَحۡمِلُ أَسۡفَارَۢا

The likeness of those who were entrusted with the *Taurat* (Torah) (i.e. to obey its commandments and to practice its legal laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey who carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them). (Qur'ān 62:5)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "One who returns his gift (i.e., takes it back after he gave it) is like a dog who vomits and then comes back to his vomit [to eat from it]." At any rate, if a play comprises of anything that is *Ḥarām* (forbidden), it too becomes *Ḥarām*.

If a play is *Ḥalāl* (lawful, permissible), we then must look into the matter of plays being performed in places of prayer. If there is some real benefit to be derived from the play and if it is intended to call people to Islām, then there is nothing wrong in performing it in a place of prayer. We know of a precedent in this regard, for the Prophet (ﷺ) approved of the Ethiopians who were playing

with their weapons in his *Masjid*, which he (ﷺ) did to bring their hearts closer to Islām.[108] If the benefit of staging a beneficial play is greater than the harm of doing so, then we follow the greater benefit. Nonetheless, if it is possible to find another hall to stage the play in, then that is better.

The Presence of Men and Women in Lecture Halls

122) The lectures we organize take place in Islāmic centers or lecture halls; men, women, and children attend the same lecture in a single auditorium; is there any harm in this?

I see no harm in this, for women and children would gather during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). For example, women and children would attend the congregational prayer together; also, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered women – even menstruating women, except that they would remain to one side – to come out for the *'Eid* prayers. They would witness good gatherings and the *da'wah* of Muslims.[109] If it is beneficial for women and children to attend a lecture, if women are apart [from the men], and if no *Fitnah* (trial, temptation) is feared, then what you described is permissible.

A Woman Accepts Islām but her Husband does not

123) Some women enter into the fold of Islām, but their husbands do not. It is well known that a Muslim woman is not lawful for a non-Muslim man, but a woman might hesitate to accept Islām, because she does not want to tear apart her family and become separated from her husband, whom she loves and perhaps depends upon for her financial needs. Sometimes, the wife stays with her husband, hoping to convince him to accept Islām, and after a year or two she might even

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[108] Related by Al-Bukhārī (949) and Muslim (892), in the chapter, "The Permissibility of Playing During the Days of *'Eid*, so long as no Sin is Involved." Al-Bukhārī related it elsewhere as well (2901), in the chapter, "Playing With Weapons..." from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

[109] This is mentioned in a ḥadīth that is related by Umm 'Atiyyah (رضي الله عنها). Al-Bukhārī (324) related it in more than one chapter in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim (890) related it as well.

succeed. Because circumstances in society have changed, may we now make ijtihād in this issue and follow the lesser of two evils? Or is there no room for ijtihād in this issue, so that a woman must separate from her husband, and perhaps even her children, as soon as she accepts Islām?

This question comprises of two questions, the following one being more important than the other: may we perform new *ijtihād* in order to solve this problem?

To answer this question, we must first understand that Islāmic legislations are divided into two categories:

1) The kind that allows for no *ijtihād*, consisting of legislations that are suitable for all times and all places. How this kind of legislation is suitable might be clear and perceived immediately, or it might be unclear and remain unperceived, at least for a while. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

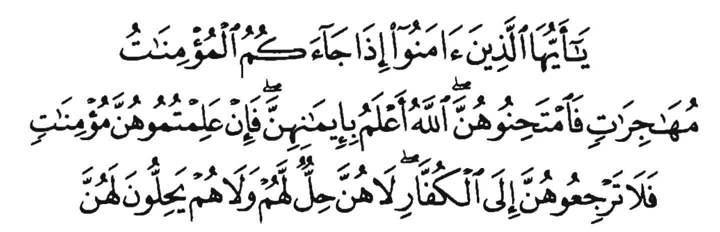
وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And Allāh (ﷻ) knows and you know not. (Qur'ān 24:19)

Regarding the issue that the questioner raised, some people might think that applying the *Sharī'ah* is difficult and that to do so will give rise to many problems. But as we will explain shortly, there is no room for *ijtihād* in the issue he mentioned: the *Sharī'ah* must be applied.

2) The kind of legislation that is general and whose application hinges upon the presence of a quality, meaning, or wisdom. Such legislations might be suitable at certain times – so that applying them is binding – and not suitable at other times – so that we do not have to apply them.

The issue of a Muslim woman not being lawful to a non-Muslim man is of the first kind: it is binding at all times and in all places, without there being any room for *ijtihād*. In *Surāt Al-Mumtaḥinah*, Allāh (ﷻ) says:



O you who believe! When believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them, Allāh (ﷻ) knows best as to their Faith, then if you ascertain that they are true believers, send them not back to the disbelievers, they

are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them. (Qur'ān 60:10)

When it is necessary to choose between one's Religion and one's family – wife, children, husband, father, mother, etc. – one's Religion comes first. Among our pious predecessors, a man might have had to kill his own father or son during battle, because that relative was fighting against Allāh's Religion.

Consequently, when a woman accepts Islām and her husband persists upon disbelief, most of the people of knowledge say that she should wait until her *'Idda* (waiting period after divorce) is completed. If, during her *'Idda*, her husband accepts Islām, then their state of marriage continues, and the two of them are not separated from one another. In the case that her 'Idda ends without her husband accepting Islām, their marriage is considered to be void from the time that the woman accepted Islām. So she is not lawful for him as a wife unless he accepts Islām and marries her again (with a new marriage contract).

Other scholars are of the view that, when she accepts Islām, a woman is confined to her husband until her *'Idda* ends, meaning that she cannot remarry. If he accepts Islām during her *'Idda*, then she is his wife. After the *'Idda* is over, she can choose: If he accepts Islām after the *'Idda* is completed, she may return to him – without a new marriage contract – if she wishes. This is the correct view, because the Prophet (ﷺ) returned his daughter, Zaynab (ﷺ), to Abi Al-'Ās Ibn Al-Rabi' after six years of the two being separated.

Therefore, if a woman accepts Islām and her husband remains upon his disbelief, the two are separated. If he then accepts Islām before her *'Idda* is completed, she is his wife, without her having any choice in the matter. But if her *'Idda* is completed, she has the right to marry someone else if she so desires. If she remains unmarried and he accepts Islām after a period of time, even after a long period of time, she may return to him. This is in answer to your second question.

Indecently-Dressed Women Going to Islāmic Centers

124) Some women go to certain Islāmic centers without wearing Ḥijāb; some are even downright indecently dressed. Granted such women are acting contrary to the teachings of Islām, were those in charge of a center to be severe, these women would not come to learn their Religion, and their Īmān (faith) would consequently decrease. As such, they will be exposed to preachers from other religions – such as Christianity – or to secular-minded people. They may even eventually become completely cut off from the Muslim community. Is it from wisdom

to progress gradually with them and advise them with kind words, even though some of them might not be applying the Sharī'ah in its entirety? In this case, the benefit of being patient with them might be greater than the harm that will result from being harsh with them. Or should we insist that they only come, wearing the Ḥijāb and dressing in the correct Islāmic manner, even though we might lose a number of women, who will stop coming to the Masjid or the Islāmic center?

In my view, we should keep the doors open for those who wish to come, but at the same time, we should constantly advise them. If they then fulfill their duty and dress properly, then that is good for everyone. The point is that, because a woman does not dress Islāmically, wearing the *Ḥijāb*, we do not prevent her from entering a place of gathering. Instead, we allow her to enter, and we advise her to dress properly.

If she still persists, then she should be prevented from entering. Yes, harm might result from preventing her, but that harm will be limited to her person; on the other hand, the harm of her dressing indecently, without the *Ḥijāb*, affects people in a general way.

This is what we say in regards to every evil: we might allow a person to meet us while he is perpetrating a sin, but we advise him, time after time. If he is guided to heed our advice, then that is well; otherwise, we should deal with him in a suitable manner or in a manner that is appropriate when dealing with proud, haughty people.

Mixing at School and at Work

125) In Western countries, and more generally, in countries wherein Muslims are the minority, Muslim women and their daughters face a difficult situation - mixing of the sexes, both in the work and school environment. We have two choices: first, we can stop working, sit at home, beg for money, and sink into a state of penury. Or, we can wear the Islāmic Ḥijāb, study, and work in those societies, societies in which mixing between the sexes is the norm. Noble Shaykh, please advise us in this matter – may Allāh reward you well.

In regards to this grave matter, I hold that a Muslim must patiently cling to Allāh's *Sharī'ah*, and one should not be of those about whom Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِىَ فِى ٱللَّهِ جَعَلَ
فِتْنَةَ ٱلنَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ

Of mankind are some who say: "We believe in Allāh (ﷻ)," but if they are made to suffer for the sake of Allāh (ﷻ), they consider the trial of mankind as Allāh's punishment. (Qur'ān 29:10)

If a woman can only achieve sustenance through that which Allāh (ﷻ) prohibited, in terms of men mixing with women, then she should forsake her livelihood and seek it through other means or elsewhere, in another country:

قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا

"Was not the earth of Allāh (ﷻ) spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" (Qur'ān 4:97)

The same goes for education; Muslim minorities would do well to build their own schools, wherein separation of the sexes is adhered to, in accordance with the teachings of Islām. If they can achieve this, much good will result. But if we are expected to say that women may mix with men, though the *Fitnah* (trial, temptation) of doing so is so dangerous, then it is not possible for us to comply and make that statement.

We cannot Call a Disbeliever our Brother

126) When I call non-Muslims to Islām, I find myself addressing them with the words, "My brothers," referring to us being brothers in humanity. This approach softens their hearts when they listen to me inviting them to Islām. Is there anything wrong with this approach?

Without a doubt, a Muslim may not call a disbeliever his brother, for Allāh (ﷻ) says:

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islāmic religion). (Qur'ān 49:10)

If people are blood brothers, then there is of course no harm in a Muslim calling his brother by his relation to him. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

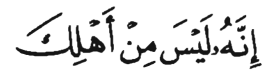
وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا

And to *'Ād* (people We sent) their brother *Hūd*. (Qur'ān 11:50)

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا

And to the *Madyan* (Midian) people (We sent) their brother *Shu'ayb*. (Qur'ān 11:84)

If a disbeliever is your blood brother, then that is fine and well, but he is not your brother in the Religion. Allāh (ﷻ) said the following words to Noah (ﷺ) about his son:



Surely, he is not of your family. (Qur'ān 11:46)

But is it not established that we are all brothers in humanity, since we are all descended from Ādam (عليه السلام)?

No one doubts that we are all descended from Ādam (عليه السلام), but we do not say, "This is my brother," intending by this statement that he is our brother in humanity; [in normal discourse], we only say that statement to our blood brother.

Visiting Non-Muslim Countries that have Muslim Minorities Living in them

127) I know that it is only permissible to visit a non-Muslim country when there is just cause for making the trip, but what if the Muslim minority in a non-Muslim country is organized such that they have built up their own society within the framework of the larger disbelieving society? Can I visit them to meet with them and call them to the teachings of Islām?

If one's intention in visiting a non-Muslim country is to support the Muslim minority and study their situation, then there is no harm in visiting them. But one must have knowledge to defend himself against specious arguments about Religion, and strong adherence to the Religion to defend himself against desires. If one is lacking in knowledge, he may become confused about his Religion when he listens to non-Muslims raising doubts about Islām. And if he is not a practising Muslim, he might end up chasing after his desires. Good comes of such a trip when one is fortified with knowledge and adherence to Islām; then, in that case, it might even become recommended for one to visit his Muslim brothers, encouraging them and making them feel that they have the support of Muslims in other lands.

Ḥajj and 'Umrah for a Woman who Accepts Islām and has no *Maḥram* (a Male with Whom it is Lawful for her to Travel)

128) Old and young, many women are entering the fold of Islām. The problem is that they do not have a Maḥram with whom they can perform Ḥajj or 'Umrah. Is it permissible for them to come with a group comprised of decent men and women, among whom she is sure to be safe?

We do not say that such women should go to perform Ḥajj or 'Umrah, because neither is obligatory upon women who do not have a *Maḥram*. If a woman who does not have a *Maḥram* dies without performing Ḥajj, she will not be punished.

فِيهِ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ مَّقَامُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۖ وَمَن دَخَلَهُۥ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ حِجُّ ٱلْبَيْتِ
مَنِ ٱسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا

> In it are manifest signs (for example), the *Maqām* (place) of Ibrāhim (Abraham); whosoever enters it, he attains security. And Ḥajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (*Ka bah*) is a duty that mankind owes to Allāh (ﷻ), those who are able to perform it. (Qur'ān 3:97)

One must have the ability to perform Ḥajj for it to be compulsory upon him, and ability here is of two kinds – legislative ability and physical ability. By physical ability, we mean that a person is physically and financially capable of performing Ḥajj. By legislative ability, we mean that one is allowed, according to the *Sharī'ah*, to perform Ḥajj. Since a woman is not allowed to travel without a *Maḥram*, a woman who has no *Maḥram* does not have the legislative ability she requires to perform Ḥajj, so she is like one who does not have the financial means necessary to perform it. Women that have no *Maḥram* should feel at ease, knowing that Ḥajj is not compulsory upon them.

Some scholars hold a different view: though a woman who does not have a *Maḥram* does not have to perform Ḥajj, she must appoint someone to perform it on her behalf if:

1) She has enough wealth to send someone else.
2) She has lost hope of gaining a *Maḥram* (for example, she loses hope of marrying).

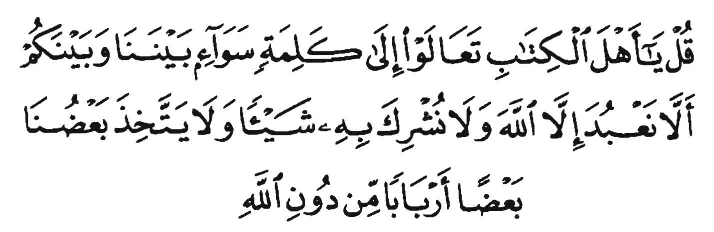
She thus becomes like an extremely old person who cannot perform Ḥajj himself, and so he appoints someone else to perform it on his behalf.

The issue is quite simple, *alḥamdulillāh*, and for each of the two above-mentioned opinions, there is a solution. According to the first opinion, a woman who does not have a *Maḥram* does not have to perform Ḥajj, so she has nothing to worry about. And according to the second opinion, if a woman has enough money but no *Maḥram*, she simply has to appoint someone else to perform Ḥajj on her behalf.

Giving a Translated Copy of the *Tafsīr* (Explanation) of the Qur'ān to Non-Muslims

129) In the West, if we do not direct our efforts to inviting non-Muslims and our Muslim brothers to the teachings of Islām, they will fall prey to preachers from other religions. My question is this: in our efforts to perform Da'wah, may we give a translated copy of the Tafsīr of the Qur'ān or a translated copy of a ḥadīth compilation – whether it is a single volume or the entire compilation – to non-Muslims?

It is established that the Prophet (ﷺ) wrote letters containing verses of the Qur'ān to kings:



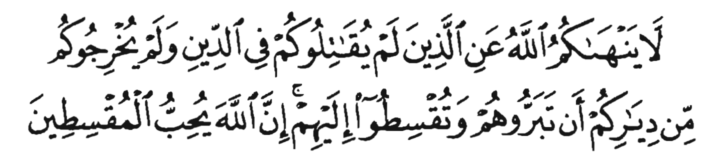
Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh (ﷻ), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh (ﷻ). (Qur'ān 3:64)

Hence, there is no harm in translating the correct meaning of the Qur'an's verses; that translation can then be used as a means of performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). But as I said, it is the meanings of the Qur'ān that should be translated; no one should set out to render a literal translation, for a literal translation is of no use to non-Arabic speaking people.

In a Country wherein they are the Minority, how should Muslims Deal with Christians?

130) To what extent should Muslims – who are the minority and live in a country that is predominantly inhabited by Christians – deal kindly with their neighbours who are Christians or followers of other religions? Is there any reason why we should not deal with them, accept their invitations, invite them to our homes, or, in general, mix with them for the purpose of making Da' wah or maintaining cordial relations?

Allāh (ﷻ) says:



> Allāh (ﷻ) does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah (ﷻ) loves those who deal with equity. (Qur'ān 60:8)

There are basically three ways in which one deals with others:

1) With kindness
2) With justice
3) With injustice

Regardless of whether one is dealing with Muslims or non-Muslims, it is *Ḥarām* (forbidden) for him to deal unjustly with them. With regard to the Prophet's saying:

> "When the People of the Book give you greetings of peace, say *Alaikum* [and (the same) upon you),"[110]

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "This is for when they do not speak *Al-Salām* (peace) clearly, when it is possible that they say *Al-Sām* (instead of *Al-Salām*; *Al-Sām* means death and *Al-Salām* means peace, so when they do not pronounce the greeting clearly, we answer, 'And the same upon you.'). But if they pronounce

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[110] Related by Al-Bukhāri (6258). Muslim (2163) related it as well, from the ḥadīth of Anas (رضي الله عنه).

'Al-Salām 'Alaikum (peace upon you) clearly, then you should say, *Wa 'Alaikam al-Salām* (and peace upon you), for Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا۟ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ أَوْ رُدُّوهَآ

> When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. (Qur'ān 4:86)."

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "To do so is just." The Prophet (ﷺ) said that we should say 'Alaikum (and the same upon you) to the People of the Book, but he explained why in a ḥadīth related by Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه): "Verily, the People of the Book say, *'Al-Sām 'Alaikum* (Death upon you), so if the People of the Book give you greetings of peace, say, *'Alaikum*."

So if they clearly say *Al-Salām 'Alaikum*, we should respond in like manner. However, when we greet them, it is not permissible for us to use a greeting that is a symbol of their religion; to greet them with words that are symbolic of their disbelief means that one is pleased with their disbelief. Just as we many not congratulate non-Muslims for drinking alcohol, we may not congratulate them for some aspect or symbol of their Religion.

As to a Muslim accepting an invitation from a non-Muslim, there is no harm in accepting it if one's intention is to invite him to Islām, for the Prophet (ﷺ) accepted the invitation of a Jew and ate the food he served him. But one must not be social to the degree that there is a *Ḥarām* (forbidden) element in his relationship with a non-Muslim – for example, one comes to love a disbeliever, being pleased with the disbelief that he is upon. It is very important for one to have a pure and sound heart. When one's heart is inclined to love a disbeliever or his disbelief, then one is in a dangerous situation, which is why Allāh (ﷻ) said:

لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ
حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ
أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ

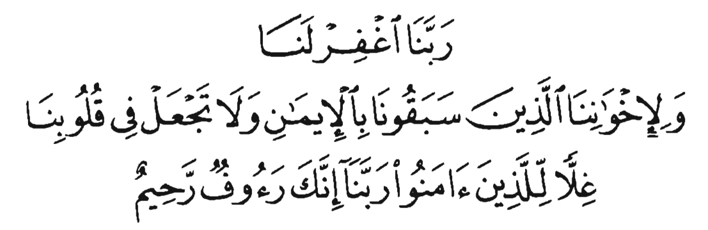
> You (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) will not find any people who believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)); even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). (Qur'ān 58:22)

The Difference between *Sunnis* and *Shi'ites*

131) Living abroad, we are subject to the message of every group and religion. One problem we are facing now is that the Shi'ites – the Ithnaa 'Ashariyyah – are spreading their message using any and all means; they are especially targeting their message at the Muslim community. One would find it hard to believe how their propagation efforts have reached so many parts of the globe. Noble Shaykh, please summarize for us some of the main differences between Sunnis and Shi'ites.

There are many differences between *Sunnis* and *Shi'ites*; here is the most important one:

The people of the Sunnah honour the Companions (ﷺ) and ask Allāh (ﷻ) to have mercy on them; they say:



"Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful." (Qur'ān 59:10)

It is well-known that the *Shi'ites* disparage the Companions, considering them to be evil-doers who apostatized after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ). Their disparagement of the Companions (ﷺ) extends beyond the Companions (ﷺ) themselves to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), to the *Sharī'ah* of Islām, and to the wisdom of Allāh (ﷻ).

Their disparagement of the Companions is clear. But how do they disparage the Prophet (ﷺ)? A man is upon the religion of his close friend, and a man's worth is judged based on the company he keeps. So by vilifying the Companions, the *Shi'ites* are by consequence vilifying the Prophet (ﷺ), for he must be like them. And we seek refuge in Allāh!

How are they disparaging the Islāmic *Sharī'ah*? The *Sharī'ah* reached us only by way of the Companions (ﷺ). If the Companions are as the *Shi'ites* described them to be, how can one trust the *Sharī'ah*, making it a way one follows in his worship of Allāh (ﷻ)?

And how do they disparage Allāh's wisdom? It is Allāh (ﷻ) Who chose the Prophet's Companions, so by consequence, the *Shi'ites* are criticizing that choice, for one asks: are evil companions appropriate for the best human being? This point represents the most important difference between the people of the Sunnah and the *Shi'ites*.

With the word *Shi'ah*, the *Shi'ites* consider themselves to be the *Shi'ah* (supporters) of the Messenger's family. But the reality is that the Messenger's family – 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه), one of the rightly-guided *Khalīfahs*, being foremost among them – are not pleased with the views of the *Shi'ites*; in fact, they absolve themselves from the Shi'ites. How then can a person be a supporter for people who absolve themselves from him and from his actions?

The most worthy of people to be supporters of the Prophet's family are the people of the Sunnah, who honour them because of two rights: that of *Īmān* (faith) and that of being relatives of the Messenger (ﷺ). However, the people of the Sunnah do not exaggerate their qualities, as opposed to the *Shi'ites*, who might even reach the level of deifying the Prophet's family; or they claim that some of them are more worthy of being a Messenger than Muḥammad (ﷺ); or they make other claims that are well-known in their different sects.

Therefore, it is important for us to present the way of *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah*, in a clear manner that clarifies the correct status of the Prophet's family (رضي الله عنهم) and the Prophet's other Companions (رضي الله عنهم), so that the falsehood of the *Shi'ites* becomes exposed.

Muslim Organizations and Governments: Their Duties towards Supporting Muslim Minorities Living Abroad

132) What are the most important obligations that Muslim organizations and governments have in supporting Muslim communities that do not live in the Islāmic world?

Muslims need to support Muslim minorities in different ways. First Muslims should send people to help Muslim minority communities become strong, practising Muslims who are able to perform *da'wah* to Islam. Second, Muslims should invite some of their brothers that live in non-Muslim countries to learn the teachings of Islām in a Muslim country. Thus a kind of exchange program becomes implemented, whereby a link exists between Muslims living in Muslim countries and Muslims living abroad. The latter group should keep the former group up to date as to their situation, so that they can get the help they need.

12- Inviting the Disbelievers to the Way of Allāh (ﷻ) (i.e., to Islām)

The Ruling on Travelling to Non-Muslim Countries

133) What is the Islāmic ruling with regard to traveling to non-Muslim countries without there being a necessity to do so?

Only when three conditions are fulfilled may one travel to one of the lands of the disbelievers:

1) One has knowledge with which he can remain protected from specious arguments, because the disbelievers will mention such arguments to instill doubts in a person about Islām. To be saved from their evil, one should have sufficient knowledge.

   The disbelievers show enmity to Allāh, to His Religion, and to His righteous slaves. They broadcast programs and send audio cassettes and publications to our countries in order to invite our children to accept Christianity. Christians involved in missionary work strive tirelessly day and night, working to take Muslims away from their Religion. This is why I strongly advise you to beware of the evil of Christians; and for that matter, the evil of Jews and Communists, for example; and the evil of hypocrites, who are enemies of Islām though they outwardly manifest it.

2) One adheres to the teachings of Islām, being strong enough in this regard to protect himself from desires and temptations, for the lands of disbelievers are lands that are replete with desire and temptation:

   إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

   They are only like cattle; nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle). (Qur'ān 25:44)

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ
وَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ

While those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as cattle eat, and the Fire will be their abode. (Qur'ān 47:12)

Disbelievers strive to enjoy life and fulfill all of their desires; no one in their lands prevents evil: A fornicator can fornicate; homosexuals can openly display and apply their homosexuality; the drunkard can drink alcohol; and all kinds of evil and wickedness are perpetrated there. If one does not have Religion to protect him from evil desires, he might succumb to them.

3) One needs to travel to one of the disbelieving lands – for hospital treatment, for knowledge that cannot be acquired in Muslim lands, for the purpose of performing *da'wah* to the way of Allāh, or for other reasons that make it necessary for him to travel to a land of the disbelievers. When one does not need to travel to a land that is inhabited by disbelievers, it is not permissible for him to do so, for there is grave danger involved in such a journey. How many people – especially among the youth – travelled to a disbelieving country with one heart but then returned with another one, going with a pure heart and returning with a rebellious, sick heart.

Here is an important issue: When some people travel to a disbelieving nation, they take citizenship there. They might do so to receive special benefits that are for citizens only, but it is categorically forbidden for them to take citizenship. To take citizenship in a disbelieving country means that one supports it, both in war and in peace. And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ بَعْضُهُمْ
أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰٓ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِىَ بِٱلْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ
مِّنْ عِندِهِۦ فَيُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَسَرُّوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ نَٰدِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

> O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as *Awliyā'* (friends, protectors, helpers, etc.), they are but *Awliyā'* to one another. And if any amongst you takes them as *Awliyā'*, then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allāh (ﷻ) guides not those people who are the *Ẓālimūn* (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust). And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship saying: "We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us." Perhaps Allāh (ﷻ) may bring a victory or a decision according to His Will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves. (Qur'ān 5:51,52)

Those who have sickness in their hearts do not fully believe in or trust Allāh's promise, which is why you will see them hurrying to show support and love to disbelievers.

Traveling to a Non-Muslim Country for the Purpose of Learning English and Inviting the Disbelievers to Islām

134) Is it permissible to travel to one of the European countries in order to learn English, in addition to inviting the disbelievers to Islām?

The questioner has two purposes: first, to learn English. I believe that it is not necessary to travel for this purpose and that one can learn English here. Second, he wants to perform *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ). To be sure, this is a good intention, as long as two conditions are fulfilled:

1) One has enough knowledge to stay protected from specious arguments that are intended to instill doubts in people about Islām. One who goes to perform *da'wah* without having knowledge is like one who goes to the battlefield without a weapon! One needs knowledge to protect his own self from becoming misguided and to convince those he is inviting, or at least to overwhelm those he is debating with sound arguments.

2) One should be a practising Muslim to such a degree that he can protect himself from evil desires and temptations. Many people who travel to lands that are inhabited by disbelievers end up falling prey to temptation.

So if one has both knowledge and worship, along with a good intention, then he deserves to be encouraged and helped for the said purpose.

What are the Main Principles and Guidelines for Inviting the Disbelievers to Islām?

135) What are the most important principles and guidelines that a Muslim must adhere to when he is inviting disbelievers to Islām?

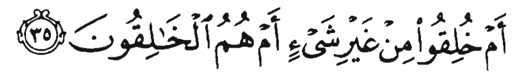
Many people do not distinguish between performing *Da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) and ordering good or forbidding evil; these are different matters that need to be distinguished:

- *da'wah* to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is of two kinds: general and specific. The first kind involves delivering lectures or writing books, with the intended audience being the general public. The second kind involves performing *da'wah* to a specific individual. This is not limited to disbelievers, for even Muslims need *da'wah*. For example, one might find certain Muslims performing major sins, all the while thinking that they are upon the truth. Such people are in need of someone who will invite them to the truth.
- A person who orders to what is good has more authority than a *dā'ī* who invites other people to Islām. To order others to do something requires a degree of authority, whereas the *dā'ī* simply presents his message, having only encouraging words to back up his message.
- A person who removes evil and is able to remove it with his own hands has more authority than one who simply orders others to perform good deeds, which is why the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

  "Whosoever from you sees evil, then let him remove it with his hand; if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart."

  As for ordering to what is good, no such order is mentioned. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not say, "Whoever from you orders to what is good, then let him order with his hand..."

Moving on to your question, we should perform *da'wah* to a disbeliever in that manner which is most appropriate to the kind of disbelief that he is upon. When inviting those who deny the existence of Allāh (ﷻ) – communists, for example – we should clarify the logical and tangible proofs that point to the existence of Allāh (ﷻ). Since they are not convinced by revealed texts, we should concentrate on logical proofs, such as the one that is suggested in this verse:



Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators? (Qur'ān 52:35)

During the battle of Badr, the Muslims captured Jubayr Ibn Mat'am (رضي الله عنه) and took him as a prisoner. He (رضي الله عنه) said, "I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) reciting [the Qur'ān], and when he (ﷺ) reached this verse:



Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators?

my heart almost flew away." This happened to him because of the power of the verse's argument, and at that point *Īmān* settled in his heart.

Answering the question posed in the verse, we say that they did not come to exist without being created and that they must have had a creator. We know that they did not create themselves, for prior to coming into being, they were non-existent. Something that is non-existent does not create, so since they did not create themselves and since they did not come into being without a creator, they must have a Creator, and He is Allāh (ﷻ).

How to Invite Disbelievers to Islām

136) We know the best approach to inviting Muslims to Islām – by encouraging them to strive for Allāh's rewards and warning them of Allāh's punishments, in both cases pointing out to them verses of the Qur'ān and aḥādīth of the Prophet (ﷺ). But what is the correct approach for inviting disbelievers to Islām?

ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ

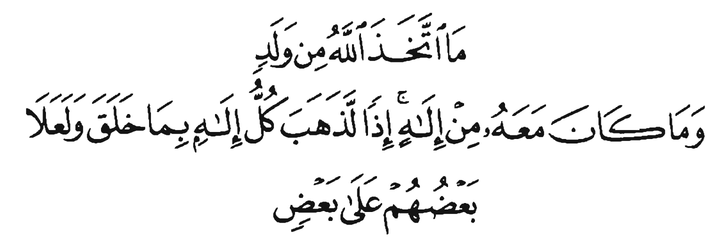
Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine inspiration and the Qur'ān). (Qur'ān 16: 125)

This verse is comprehensive of inviting Muslims and disbelievers to the teachings of Islām. So we look at a disbeliever's particular form of disbelief, for instance, and then we invite him to Islām, contrasting for him the intrinsic logic of Islām and the illogical nature of his disbelief.

For example, if he claims that Allāh is the third of three – like the Christians do – we should point out the impossibility of his belief, a belief that is contrary to both sound logic and revealed texts. We say to him that Allāh (ﷻ) said:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

> Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allāh (ﷻ), then verily both would have been ruined. (Qur'ān 21:22)



> No son (or offspring or children) did Allāh (ﷻ) beget, nor is there any *ilah* (god) along with Him; (if there had been many gods), behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! (Qur'ān 23:91)

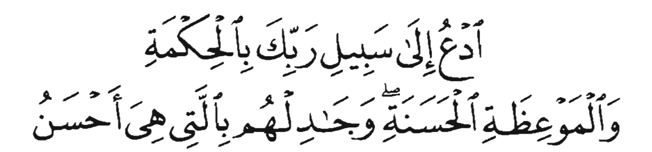
Furthermore, we should clarify to him that there is one true God – Allāh; that 'Īsa (عليه السلام) is Allāh's slave and Messenger; that 'Īsa's mother is *Ṣiddīqah* [a truthful (slave of Allāh)]; that both 'Īsa (عليه السلام) and his mother would eat food; that they would both drink, and had they both truly been gods, they would not have done any of that.

In summary, we first invite a disbeliever by disproving the disbelief that he is upon, but we do so with the best possible speech. Then we clarify Islām to him, pointing out its short-term and long-term benefits. And then we should contrast those benefits with the harms that result from disbelief.

It is Compulsory to Invite one's Servant to Islām

137) If one has a disbelieving male or female servant, is it compulsory upon him to invite that servant to Islām?

Yes, if one has a servant, he must invite him to Islām, unless someone else has taken up the responsibility of doing so; but since it is rare that someone else invites a servant to Islām (since he is so occupied in performing duties in his employer's home), the responsibility of performing *Da'wah* to him lies mainly with his employer. That an employer must invite his servant to Islām is proven by this comprehensive verse:



> Invite (mankind O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) to the way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. (Qur'ān 16:125)

And when the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'ādh (رضي الله عنه) to Yemen, he instructed him, saying:

> "Invite them to the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and that I am the Messenger of Allāh..."

One should keep in mind the great reward he achieves when another person is guided at his hands; in fact, he will have rewards similar to that achieved by the person that became guided, in all that he does, for the guide to what is good is like the doer himself.[111] And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "For Allāh (ﷻ) to guide a single man through you is better for you than [for you to have] red camels (one of the most precious kinds of wealth at that time)."

Do not Make Room for them when they Meet you

138) How can we bring into harmony the ḥadīth that encourages us to force a Christian to the narrowest part of a pathway when we meet him and the aḥādīth which indicate that we should invite Christians to accept Islām?

First, we must realize that the chief of *du'āt* who call to the way of Allāh (ﷻ) is none other than the Prophet (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) is the best guide to Islām, and he (ﷺ) is the most knowledgeable person in matters that have to do with guiding people to the truth.

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[111] This is based on a ḥadīth related by Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه), in which the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Whoever guides to what is good will have a reward equal to the doer of that good." Ibn Ḥibbān related it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and Al-Bazzār related it in truncated form: "The guide to what is good is like its doer." Al-Ṭabarānī related it in *Al-Kabīr* and *Al-Awsaṭ*, from the ḥadīth of Sahl Ibn Sa'ad (رضي الله عنه); refer to *Al-Targhīb Wa l-Tarhīb* (1/120). In *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Targhīb Wa l-Tarhīb*, Al-Albānī ruled that this ḥadīth is authentic (111-115). Refer to *Al-Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (1660).

Second, if our understanding regarding any saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) is contrary to wisdom, then we must disregard our incorrect understanding. This in no way means that we should contrast the Prophet's *aḥādīth* with what we understand from them, because our understanding is at best limited. Nonetheless, there are universal principles in the *Sharī'ah* that one refers when trying to understand individual issues.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Do not initiate *Al-Salām* (greetings of peace) with the Jews and Christians, and if you meet them in the pathway, force them to its narrowest part."

Keep in mind that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Do not initiate," at the beginning of the ḥadīth and "If you meet them," at its end. Taking the first and last part of the ḥadīth into consideration, one should take away this understanding: "Do not make extra space when you meet them, whereby they have much space and you are constricted. Rather, continue on your course, and if there is narrowness in the path, do not constrict yourselves (thus humbling yourselves before them), but instead give that part of the road to them." It is known from the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) that, if he saw a disbeliever, he would not go to make the pathway narrow for him; the Prophet (ﷺ) did not do this with the Jews in Al-Madīnah, nor did his Companions (ﷺ) do so after conquering various lands.

Therefore the ḥadīth means, "Just as you should not initiate greetings of peace with them, do not give your space away to them in a pathway. If you meet them, do not become parted among yourselves, so that they have all of the space in the pathway to pass by you; rather, continue on your way, and if the pathway is narrow, let them be the ones who have its narrowest part."

All that this ḥadīth indicates is the honour of a Muslim: he must not humble himself except before his Lord (ﷻ). The ḥadīth in no way indicates that we should not invite disbelievers to Islām; in fact, if one has the ability to do so, it is incumbent upon him to perform *da'wah* to the disbelievers.

The Ruling on Organizing Debates with People of other Religions

139) Is it permissible to organize debates with followers of other religions, such as the famous debates that take place between the Dā'ī Aḥmad Dīdāt and Christian priests?

When there is a need to do so, it becomes compulsory upon Muslims to debate disbelievers. In this verse, Allāh (ﷻ) commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to debate with them:

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا
بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh (ﷻ), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh (ﷻ). Then if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'ān 3:64)

Furthermore, we know of two instances wherein Ibrāhīm (s) debated with disbelievers – once with the king who debated with him about his Lord, and on another occasion with his people, the story of which is mentioned in these verses:

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ
لَآ أُحِبُّ ٱلْءَافِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَٰذَا
رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ
أَكْبَرُ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾
إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

When the night covered him over with darkness he saw a star. He said: "This is my lord." But when it set, he said: "I like not those that set." When he saw the moon rising up, he said: "This is my lord." But when it set, he said: "Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be among the erring people." When he saw the sun rising up, he said: " This is my lord. This is greater." But when it set, he said: "O my people! I am indeed free from all that you join partners in worship with Allāh (ﷻ). Verily, I have turned my face towards Him Who has created the heavens and the earth *Ḥanifah* (Islāmic Monotheism i.e. worshipping none but Allāh Alone) and I am not of *Al-Mushrikūn*." (Qur'ān 6:76-79)

If a Muslim wishes to debate a disbeliever and if he expects to overwhelm his opponent with sound arguments, he must be knowledgeable about both Islām and the religion of his opponent, for a successful debater needs to accomplish two things:

1) Establish the proofs that support his view.

2) Disprove the proofs that support the view of his opponent.

Muslim *du'āt* should be confident in this regard, for the people of falsehood are not supported by sound proofs, and furthermore, their falsehood will lead to their ultimate failure. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُحَآجُّونَ فِى ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا ٱسْتُجِيبَ لَهُۥ حُجَّتُهُمْ
دَاحِضَةٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ

> And those who dispute concerning Allāh (ﷻ), after it has been accepted (by the people), of no use is their dispute before their Lord, and on them is wrath, and for them will be a severe torment. (Qur'ān 42:16)

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِٱلْحَقِّ
عَلَى ٱلْبَٰطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُۥ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ ۚ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ

> Nay, We fling (send down) the truth (this Qur'ān) against the falsehood (disbelief), so it destroys it, and behold, it (falsehood) is vanished. And woe to you for that (lie) which you ascribe (to Us) (against Allāh (ﷻ) by uttering that Allāh (ﷻ) has a wife and a son). (Qur'ān 21:18)

I myself watched a portion of a debate that took place between the Muslim *Dā'ī*, Aḥmad Dīdāt, and a Christian priest. I liked what I saw, and news later reached me that the priest was overwhelmed by Dīdāt's sound arguments; as a result, the priest could not continue the debate and his weakness became apparent to all who were present, and all praise is for Allāh.

It is Okay to Display Happiness upon the Occasion of a Disbeliever Accepting Islām

140) Is it permissible for us to celebrate the occasion of a disbeliever accepting Islām, to make him feel welcome as our brother?

When one of the disbelievers accepts Islām, there is no harm in displaying happiness, as long as the occasion is not taken as an anniversary that is celebrated every year. In Islām, there are only three legislated holidays: *'Eid Al-Aḍḥā*, *'Eid Al-Fiṭr*, and the weekly *'Eid – Jumu'ah* (Friday).

Though the occasion may not be celebrated on a yearly basis, when someone has just entered the fold of Islām, it is okay to prepare food and gather together to welcome him.

In His Noble Book, Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) Clarified that Christians and Jews are Disbelievers

141) In a certain Masjid in Europe, an orator proclaimed that it is not permissible to say that Jews and Christians are disbelievers. As you know – may Allāh preserve you – most Muslims in Europe are very limited in their knowledge about Islām, and we fear that his claim will spread. Please clarify this issue for us.

What he said is misguidance, and it might even be disbelief. In His Noble Book, Allāh (عز وجل) declared that Jews and Christians are disbelievers. Allāh (عز وجل) said:

وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ ٱلنَّصَٰرَى
ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُم بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ ۖ
يُضَٰهِـُٔونَ قَوْلَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ ۚ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَحْبَارَهُمْ
وَرُهْبَٰنَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَسِيحَ ٱبْنَ
مَرْيَمَ وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا ۖ
لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

And the Jews say: 'Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allāh (عز وجل), and the Christians say: Messiah is the son of Allāh (عز وجل). That is a saying from their mouths. They imitate the saying of the disbelievers of old. Allāh's curse be on them, how they are deluded away from the truth! They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allāh (عز وجل), and (they also

> took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Maryam, while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded [in the *Taurat* (Torah) and the *Injīl* (Gospel)) to worship none but One *Illāh* (God-Allāh (ﷻ)) *Lā ilāha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). Praise and glory be to Him, (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)." (Qur'ān 9:30,31)

This verse proves that they are polytheists. In other verses as well, Allāh (ﷻ) proclaimed their disbelief:

لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ
ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ

> Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allāh (ﷻ) is the Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary). (Qur'ān 5:17)

لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَٰثَةٍ

> Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allāh is the third of the three (in a Trinity)." (Qur'ān 5:73)

لُعِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُۥدَ وَعِيسَى
ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ

> Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dāwūd (David) and 'Īsa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). (Qur'ān 5:78)

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ

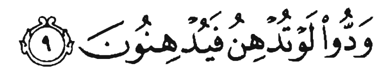
> Verily those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islām, the Qur'ān and the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)) from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and *Al-Mushrikūn* will abide in the Fire of Hell. (Qur'ān 98:6)

There are a number of other verses and *aḥādīth* that impart a similar meaning.

The Jews and Christians do not believe in Muḥammad (ﷺ), and they consider him to be a liar. So by doubting that Jews and Christians are disbelievers, one becomes, without a doubt, a disbeliever himself. And how perfect Allāh is!

How can one be satisfied with saying that it is not permissible to use the word disbelief for Christians when they say that Allāh is the third of three? Considering that Christians say that *Al-Masīh* is the son of Allāh and that Jews say, "Allāh is poor and we are rich," and, "Allāh's Hand is tied up," how can one be pleased with himself when he argues that they are not disbelievers? Considering that Jews and Christians ascribe such base qualities to their Lord, how can one claim that they are not disbelievers? And considering that their Creator, Allāh (ﷻ), proclaimed that they are disbelievers, how can one then claim that they are not disbelievers?

I call upon the man you described to repent to Allāh (ﷻ) and to read Allāh's saying:



> They wish that you should compromise (in religion out of courtesy) with them, so they (too) would compromise with you. (Qur'an 68:9)

He should refrain from compromising with them about their disbelief, and he should instead proclaim their disbelief to all, making it clear that they are the dwellers of the Hellfire. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> "By the One who has the soul of Muḥammad in His Hand, no one from this nation – i.e. the nation that is being invited – hears of me, be he a Jew or a Christian, and then dies without believing in what I was sent with, except that he will be from the people of the Hellfire."[112]

It is compulsory upon Jews and Christians to follow the illiterate Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ), about whom 'Īsa (عليه السلام) gave glad tidings. Muḥammad (ﷺ) is well-known to the Jews and Christians; in fact, they know him just like they know their own children.

ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِيَّ ٱلْأُمِّيَّ ٱلَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ
فِي ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ

[112] Related by Muslim (153), in the chapter, "It is Compulsory to Believe in the Message of our Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ)..." from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟
ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muḥammad (ﷺ)) whom they find written with them in the *Taurat* (Torah) (Deut,xviii 15) and the *Injīl* (Gospel) (John xiv 16),-he commands them for *Al-Ma'rūf*; and forbids them from *Al-Munkar*; he allows them as lawful *Al-Ṭayyibāt* [(i.e. all good and lawful), and prohibits them as unlawful *Al-Khabā'ith* (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allāh's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'ān) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful. (Qur'ān 7:157)

'Īsa (عليه السلام) gave glad tidings of the coming of Muḥammad (ﷺ) after him:

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا
جَآءَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦﴾

And (remember) when 'Īsa, son of Maryam, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allāh (ﷻ) unto you confirming the *Taurat* [(Torah) which came] before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad. But when he (Aḥmad i.e. Muḥammad (ﷺ)) came to them with clear proofs, they said: " This is plain magic." (Qur'ān 61:6)

When the awaited Aḥmad came to them with clear proofs, they said, "This is plain magic." Aḥmad is the superlative form of the word *Al-Ḥamd* (praise), so the Prophet (ﷺ) is the most praiseworthy of people to Allāh (ﷻ); he (ﷺ) has the best qualities among creation, and so Allāh (ﷻ) inspired 'Īsa (عليه السلام) to call Muḥammad (ﷺ), Aḥmad.

Without a doubt, one is a disbeliever if he claims that there is a religion on earth that Allāh (ﷻ) accepts other than Islām. Allāh (ﷻ) said in His Book:

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ
دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers. (Qur'ān 3:85)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ
عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمَ دِينًا

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion. (Qur'ān 5:3)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:

إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ

Truly, the religion in the Sight of Allāh (ﷻ) is Islām. (Qur'ān 3:19)

So I repeat yet again that the person you referred to in your question must repent to Allāh (ﷻ); he must clarify that Jews and Christians are disbelievers, for they have disbelieved even after the proof has become established upon them.

The Jews were described as being people who earned Allāh's anger, because they knew the truth and opposed it; the Christians, on the other hand, were described as being misguided, because they wanted the truth but deviated away from it. But now, since they all know the truth yet continue to oppose it, they all deserve Allāh's anger.

I invite all Jews and Christians to believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and all of His Messengers (ﷺ) and to follow Muhammad (ﷺ), because that is what they were ordered to do in their revealed Books. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

۞ وَٱكْتُبْ لَنَا فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِنَّا
هُدْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ۚ قَالَ عَذَابِىٓ أُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَنْ أَشَآءُ ۖ وَرَحْمَتِى
وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۚ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ

ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِىَّ ٱلْأُمِّىَّ ٱلَّذِى يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ
فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟
ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ قُلْ
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ٱلَّذِى
لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ
فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ٱلنَّبِىِّ ٱلْأُمِّىِّ ٱلَّذِى يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ
وَكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَٱتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter. Certainly we have turned unto you." He said: "(As to) My Punishment I afflict therewith whom I will and My Mercy embraces all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who are the *Muttaqūn* (pious), and give *Zakāt*; and those who believe in Our *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs and revelations etc.); Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muḥammad (ﷺ)) whom they find written with them in the *Taurat* (Torah) (Deut,xviii 15) and the *Injīl* (Gospel) (John xiv 16),-he commands them for *Al-Ma'ruf* (i.e. Islāmic Monotheism and all that Islām has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief and polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islām has forbidden); he allows them as lawful *Al-Ṭayyibāt* [(i.e. all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful *Al-Khabā'ith* (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allāh's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'ān) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful. Say (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allāh (ﷻ)- to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. *Lā ilāha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He who gives life and causes death. So

> believe in Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger (Muḥammad (ﷺ)), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muḥammad (ﷺ)) who believes in Allāh (ﷻ) and His Words [(this Qur'ān), the *Taurat* (Torah) and the *Injīl* (Gospel) and also Allāh's Word: "Be!"-and he was, i.e. 'Īsa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary)], and follow him so that you may be guided." (Qur'ān 7:156-158)

If a Jew or a Christian accepts Islām, he has two rewards, for the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> "There are three [people] who have two rewards: a man from the People of the Book who believes in his Prophet (ﷺ) and in Muḥammad (ﷺ)..."[113]

In the chapter about apostates, the author of *Al-Iqnā'* said, "...or if one does not consider a person to be a disbeliever or doubts that he is a disbeliever when that person follows a religion other than Islām, as is the case in regards to Christians, then he himself is a disbeliever."

The author of *Al-Iqnā'* then related that Shaykh Al-Islām said, "When one believes that churches are places wherein Allāh is worshipped [and obeyed], when one believes that what the Jews and Christians do is worship of Allāh and obedience to Him and His Messenger, or when one loves their worship and helps them to build a church and establish their religion, feeling that he is obeying Allāh, then he is a disbeliever."

Elsewhere he said, "Whoever believes that it is an act of worship to Allāh (ﷻ) to visit the people of *Dhimmah* (Jews and Christians that live in Muslim lands) in their churches, then he is an apostate."

Performing *Jihād* against the Hypocrites is not like Performing *Jihād* against the Disbelievers

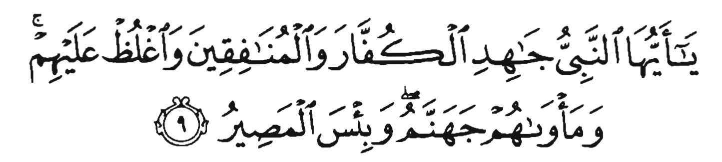
142) What is the best way to counteract the efforts of some born Muslims who attack Islām by promoting secular or other ideas?

The Muslim Nation must defend itself against every weapon that is pointed towards Islām, but we must defend against each enemy in the manner that is

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[113] A portion of a ḥadīth that is related by Al-Bukhārī (97), in the chapter, "A Man Who Teaches His Nation And Family." He related it elsewhere as well. Muslim (154) related it, in the chapter, "It Is Compulsory To Believe In The Message Of Our Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ)..." from the ḥadīth of Abū Mūsa Al-Ash'ari (ﷺ).

most appropriate to his circumstances. With regard to those who fight Islām with their sayings and ideas, we must clarify the falsehood they are upon through the mention of logical proofs in addition to proofs from the *Sharī'ah*. With regard to those who fight Islām on an economic front, we, as a Nation, must contain their aggression or equal it, if possible, with a similar attack on them. Similarly, we must spread the message that the best way to establish a sound economy based on justice is the way of Islām. And with regard to those who fight Islām with weapons, we must fight them in a way that is appropriate to their weapons. Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> O Prophet (Muḥammad (ﷺ))! strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be severe against them, their abode will be Hell, and worst indeed is that destination. (Qur'ān 66:9)

It should be clear in our minds that performing *Jihād* against the hypocrites is not like performing *Jihād* against the disbelievers: the former are fought with knowledge and speech; the latter are fought with the spear and sword.

Islām is the Religion of Truth

143) What do our esteemed scholars say about those who use Islām to achieve their own personal objectives?

Islām – and all praise is for Allāh – is the Religion of truth. Allāh (ﷻ) said to His Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ):

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا

> Verily, We have sent you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) with the truth (Islām), a bringer of glad tidings (for those who believe in what you brought, that they will enter Paradise) and warner (for those who disbelieve in what you brought, they will enter the Hell-Fire). (Qur'ān 2:119)

Islām is loftier and nobler and grander than for one to use it as a ladder to achieve his personal ambitions. Though any person can claim that he is from the supporters and defenders of Islām, one must judge his own actions according to Allāh's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah, to see whether he is truthful in his

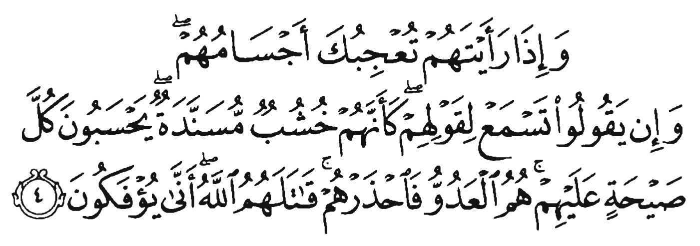
claim. We must remember that the hypocrites too claim that they adhere to the teachings of Islām:

> When the hypocrites come to you (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)), they say: "We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allāh (ﷻ)."

Then Allāh (ﷻ) said:

> Allāh (ﷻ) knows that you are indeed His Messenger and Allāh (ﷻ) bears witness that the hypocrites are liars indeed. They have made their oaths a screen (for their hypocrisy). Thus they hinder (men) from the Path of Allāh (ﷻ). Verily, evil is what they used to do.

Until Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> And when you look at them, their bodies please you; and when they speak, you listen to their words. They are as blocks of wood propped up. They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemies, so beware of them. May Allāh (ﷻ) curse them! How are they denying (or deviating from) the right Path. (Qur'ān 63:4)

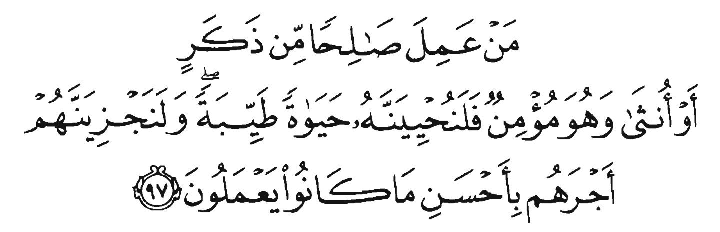
The hypocrites are so eloquent and persuasive in their speech that one who listens to them thinks that they are upon the truth.

Under any situation, it is not permissible for one to use Islām to achieve personal ambitions, making the Religion a means of achieving some worldly end; rather, one must sincerely adhere to Islām and hope for the wonderful rewards of doing so – honour and strength in this world followed by the reward of the Hereafter. Allāh (ﷻ) said:

وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمَا ٱسْتَخْلَفَ
ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى ٱرْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ
وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِى لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِى
شَيْـًٔا

> Allāh (ﷻ) has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islām). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate any thing (in worship) with Me. (Qur'ān 24:55)

And Allāh (ﷻ) said:



> Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islāmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter). (Qur'ān 16:97)